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THE INDIAN in MINNESOTA



A REPORT TO GOVERNOR LUTHER W. YOUNGDAHL

BY

THE GOVERNOR'S INTERRACIAL COMMISSION
OF MINNESOTA

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TO
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OF
MINNESOTA
BY
THE GOVERNOR'S INTERRACIAL
COMMISSION

April 1, 1947

This is the second of a series of reports to the Governor on various racial and religious situations which may affect the public peace in Minnesota during the post-war years.

THE GOVERNOR'S INTERRACIAL COMMISSION



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A Foreword

by

*Governor Luther W. Youngdahl
of Minnesota*

It is only a little more than two years ago since six American marines fought their way to the top of Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima and there planted the Stars and Stripes. Three of the six heroes died in bringing us final victory. We should not forget that one of the three who returned was a youth of Indian descent although not from this state. Today he works on a reservation in his home state and is reported to have said that he has found that "the white man looks down on the Indian" and that he "doesn't stand a chance off the reservation."

Those are words we cannot ignore if we really believe in the spirit of brotherhood. They should arouse us to a serious appraisal of our attitude toward the citizen who happens to be of Indian descent.

"The Indian in Minnesota" is a report of the Governor's Interracial Commission to the Governor. The Commission was established in 1943 as an advisory body to examine the interracial trends within the state and to study any significant conditions which might cause serious social disorders within our society.

The American Indians comprise the largest racial minority group in Minnesota today. As such, they constitute a group to whom we must devote serious effort in correcting those conditions which tend to retard their assimilation into our way of life. We need to bear in mind that the Indians are citizens of both our state and nation. We must help them take their rightful places as citizens, with all accompanying privileges and responsibilities. Our citizens of Indian ancestry have skill and qualities that can make them a great human resource in Minnesota.

We also must make an accurate appraisal of the Indian's situation. This study indicates that the Indian's life in Minne-

sota is not an easy one. We should be more appreciative of the hardships of these people after reading this report. It indicates that the problem is a difficult one with certain restrictions and confusions of authority between various levels of government, the tendency of the Indian to live on reservations, and inability to find economic security. On the brighter side of the picture, we should note the many examples of Indians who have succeeded in adjusting themselves to the white man's mode of living.

It is not the purpose of this report to give the complete answers to the problems and questions involved. This study, rather, is presented to the people of Minnesota in the hope that it will be carefully read and discussed. It will have fulfilled its purpose well if it provokes thought and stimulates debate which will later crystallize into ideas for necessary action.

While the shadow of atomic fission hangs over the world, all races must quickly learn to cooperate according to the principles of justice or perish. Within Minnesota the dominant white group might set the example by correcting wrongs done to the Indian whose forefathers were on the land before the white man came. As a means towards the planning of such a constructive work I recommend to the citizens the examination of this report.

Letter of Transmittal

February 19, 1947

The Honorable Luther W. Youngdahl
Governor of Minnesota
State Capitol
Saint Paul, Minnesota

Dear Governor Youngdahl:

Under the title of *The Indian in Minnesota*, the Governor's Interracial Commission hereby submits to you a report on the legal, economic and social factors which affect the lives of the Indians within Minnesota.

The work of collecting the data and constructing the report was done for the Commission by Miss Beatrice Bernhagen of Hamline University. She is recognized as an authority on the subject throughout the Northwest, and she worked under the guidance of an advisory committee composed of Rev. Benjamin Moore, Dr. Charles Nelson Pace, and Bishop Stephen C. Keeler.

Within Minnesota, there is latent much good will toward the Indian. Yet it is substantially inoperative because many citizens are uninformed about the problems of the modern Indian. If Indians and white persons within the state are to work for more constructive policies, the average citizen must first possess more information. The hope entertained by the Commission is that the distribution of this report across the state, in the form of an attractive booklet, might be the means of occasioning an extensive discussion of the present status of the Indian within Minnesota. A well-informed citizen is a constructive citizen.

Very respectfully yours,

Francis J. Gilligan
Chairman
The Governor's Interracial Commission



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Introduction

At a time when every newspaper or periodical carries articles describing the economic, political, and social problems of the various conquered nations of Europe, of displaced people, and of minority groups, it is difficult to realize that the remains of a once proud and self-sufficient people that were conquered, displaced, and now constitute a minority, reside within the limits of Minnesota today. The Indian population of Minnesota today includes the descendants of a people who in the short span of one hundred years have been treated as a dangerous and hostile enemy, as a subject race, and as uncivilized savages. Today these people constitute the largest racial minority group in the population of the state and as such are confronted with most of the problems facing other minorities here and elsewhere. This report seeks to present the historical facts that help explain the present position of the Minnesota Indian. It furthermore seeks to present information about the economic and social situation of Minnesota's Indian population today.

Who Is the Indian?

One of the main difficulties encountered in making this survey was to fix a definition of an Indian and to determine what is meant by the following terms: a ward Indian, a non-ward Indian, an enrolled Indian, a non-enrolled Indian, a competent and a non-competent Indian. This difficulty is not peculiar to Minnesota, for reports of surveys made in Wisconsin and North Dakota present the same problem. The extent of the confusion is clearly indicated by a consultant of the Federal Children's Bureau in an article discussing the needs of Indian children. She writes: "As defined by the Indian Service an Indian includes anyone of Indian blood, who through wardship, treaty, or inheritance has acquired certain rights. The Bureau of the Census defines an Indian as any person having Indian blood to such a degree as to be recognized in his community as an Indian. The term 'ward Indian' as defined by the Indian Service means a person of Indian blood who is entitled to the assistance and protection of the federal government in

civil, property, and other rights. The terms 'competent' and 'incompetent' as applied in early days to the ability of the Indian to handle his own affairs of property are being replaced by 'restricted' and 'non-restricted.' The restricted Indian is one whose property is under the control of the government and cannot be disposed of without the approval of some governmental authority. The non-restricted Indian is one who has sui juris in all respects."¹

For purposes of this report the following definition will be used:

An Indian is a person of sufficient Indian blood to be recognized as an Indian in the community.

An enrolled Indian is one whose name is found on the census rolls of any Indian agency in 1945.

A non-enrolled Indian is one who was not enrolled in any Indian agency in 1945. It might be observed, incidentally, that many Indians classified as wards and enrolled in an agency are accepted as whites in counties not having an Indian population.

Sources of Information

The sources of information for this report include:

Interviews with the superintendents of the Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency and of the Red Lake Indian Agency.

Interviews with school principals and teachers currently teaching in schools with Indian students.

Interviews with Indians residing in Indian communities and in the Twin City area.

Interviews with members of county welfare board staffs that are now working with Indian people.

Interviews with members of the clergy of various Catholic and Protestant churches that are actively working with Indians in the Indian communities.

Interviews with staff members of the Indian Service that are working in the field of Indian education, health, and social service.

Completed questionnaires which were circulated to representative Minnesota businesses in urban and rural Minnesota.

Reports of the Minnesota Division of Social Welfare on the subject of Indian welfare.

Reports of the Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency at Cass Lake, Minnesota.

Reports of the Red Lake Agency at Red Lake, Minnesota.

Because of limitations in time, the counties visited in the preparation of this report were selected to include Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Goodhue, Itasca, Mahnommen, and St. Louis counties.

The other sources used in the preparation of this report are cited in the footnotes and bibliography.

¹Hendricks, Hazel A., "Social Needs of Indian Children." *Social Service Review*, XI, 52-53 (March, 1937).

Chapter I

THE INDIAN AND THE WHITE MAN MEET

The largest, the oldest, and the most persistent minority group residing within Minnesota is the American Indian. Every person living in Minnesota or coming into the state is acquainted with the story of Hiawatha, the song of Red Wing, Minnehaha Falls, and the Mississippi River — the Father of Waters. All are inextricably tied up with the folklore of the American Indian and particularly with the culture and life of the Chippewa and Sioux nations, members of which comprise the present population.

Although the American Indian is well known in Minnesota through folklore and place names, and although most people when asked express some curiosity, some interest, and real sympathy for the group, there exists considerable misinformation and misunderstanding about the Indian in Minnesota. Many intelligent and well-informed persons still picture the Indian in a tepee, while others believe he is the recipient of an allowance paid by the federal government. Few realize that the Indian is a citizen both of the nation and of the state and that as such he is entitled to share in all the benefits and privileges of that citizenship as well as to assume the responsibilities of a citizen in the community.

Early Minnesotans

Any study of the Indian in Minnesota must begin with a brief consideration of the Chippewa and Dakota peoples over the past 150 years. His status today, as an individual, in the family, in industry, in society, and even on the reservation, is largely the inevitable result of early treaties with, federal legislation for, and a century and a half of practice in working with the group. The Indians' position today in Minnesota as elsewhere throughout the nation is a peculiar one developing out of many efforts of the dominant white group, the conquering people, to avail themselves of the better resources of the Indian, especially his land, and at the same time to be fair and equitable to a minority group, once referred to as "subjects."²

²Cohen, Felix S., *Handbook of Federal Indian Law*, 155, quoted from Caleb Cushing, Attorney General of the United States, 7 Op. A.G. 746 (1856).

The area within the present limits of Minnesota was the scene of early exploration and trade expeditions by the French who visited the Lake Superior district and the Mississippi valley in the seventeenth century. Those men were interested in the further exploration of the territory, the extension of the fur trade, and the establishment of trading posts. Though the entire district was claimed in the name of the King of France by the right of discovery confirmed by occupancy, the early French traders with the Sioux did not encourage colonization, which would have meant clearing the forests and driving both game and the Indians further westward. The interest of the French in the development of the area remained, though their efforts were not always continuous until the cession of the land west of the Mississippi to Spain in 1762 and the cession of all land east of the Mississippi to Great Britain in the Treaty of Paris in 1763.³

The Sioux Indians

Descriptions of the Dakota nation, the most powerful and numerous group of the Sioux, are found in the early writings of the French explorers and of the Jesuits who established missions in the Indian country among both the Chippewa and the Sioux. From these narratives, it can be concluded that, at the time when the white man and his civilization were introduced, the culture of the Sioux was essentially woodland. Their weapons, made of stone and wood, included hatchets, knives, arrows, and spearheads. In the later period their simple economic life was based on barter but still embraced hunting, fishing, and food gathering. The family was a loosely knit organization in which responsibility for the rearing and training of children was divided among parents, grandparents, and relatives, with the last assuming primary responsibility. The form of marriage practiced was polygamy.⁴ The most common sort of housing in their villages was a one-room dwelling made of earth and bark and, in the field for hunting or for war, of mats and skins. Their tribal organization, concerned primarily with civil matters, was well developed and highly democratic.

³Folwell, William W., *A History of Minnesota*, I, 1-79.

⁴Hodge, Frederick W., *Handbook of the American Indians*, Part I, 279.

At the time the white man entered the area, these Indians were essentially seasonal migrants. With the further development of trade and with the continued westward movement of settlement, they became more migrant, extending their hunting grounds and their way of life.

In 1803, after the completion of the Louisiana purchase, the United States held legal title to practically all the land now included within the State of Minnesota. Such title was of course subject to the right of occupancy which was conceded to the Indians. At that time, two Indian nations, the Chippewa and the Sioux, resided in Minnesota; their lands were separated by a somewhat fluid and unstable boundary drawn east and west through the central portion of the state. The Sioux nations held possession of the Mississippi valley south of the Sioux-Chippewa boundary to the Arkansas River and from the Mississippi west to the Rockies. The most powerful nation of the Sioux was the Dakota or Sioux group whom various explorers in the seventeenth century had found dwelling in villages on and about Lake Mille Lacs.⁵

The Chippewa Indians

The Chippewa or Ojibway nation of Algonquin stock, originally located on the St. Lawrence River and as far east as the present New England States, occupied the northern part of Minnesota from the shores of Lake Superior to Leech and Red Lakes. This nation, driven from their own homes by the Iroquois about the middle of the seventeenth century and later armed by the French, had moved westward, where they soon came into open conflict with the Sioux. The first outbreaks of this war between the Chippewa and the Sioux were sporadic and resulted from family feuds. One reprisal followed another. With the southwest movement of the Chippewa into Sioux territory, the Chippewa desire for land, and particularly the wild rice beds, was the causal factor. With the continued expansion of the Chippewa west and south, a half century of open warfare followed, culminating in 1825 in the treaty between the Sioux and the Chippewa at Prairie du Chien.⁶

⁵Folwell, *Op. Cit.* I, 79.

⁶Winchell, N. H., *The Aborigines of Minnesota*, Part IV, 617.

Chapter II

THE INDIAN TREATIES

The history of the Chippewa and Sioux nations from 1803 to 1858, when Minnesota became a state, is essentially one of treaties concluded between these nations and the United States government. These treaties, which have been termed "legal fiction," are characterized by successive transfers of territory which opened the land to white occupancy and made possible the development of the timber and mining industries, agriculture and commerce.

Military Aims

Within two years after the cession of land included in the Louisiana purchase and after the assumption of governmental responsibility for the area by the United States, the first of the long series of treaties with the Sioux was negotiated. In 1805, the first treaty written in Minnesota was negotiated by Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike at the juncture of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. This treaty, which was signed on September 23, 1805, followed a council meeting with the Sioux. The council was opened by Lieutenant Pike, who stated the objectives of his expedition, requested the Sioux to make peace with the Chippewa, and asked the Sioux to release two pieces of land—one at the mouth of the St. Croix and one at the Falls of St. Anthony.⁸ Here as one writer has said, "For sixty gallons of liquor 'to clear their throats', and presents valued at two hundred dollars the chiefs assented to the cession of over 100,000 acres of land."⁹

The treaty provided for a cession of land for the establishment of military posts. The article, concerning payment to be made the Sioux, was left blank by Lieutenant Pike. Subsequently, on April 16, 1808, when the United States Senate ratified the treaty, this article was completed with the provision for paying the Sioux \$2,000 in cash or merchandise.¹⁰

⁸Hansen, Marcus L., *Old Fort Snelling 1819-1858*, 176.

⁹Pike's *Explorations in Minnesota 1805-1806*, Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society, I, 379.

¹⁰Mahan, Bruce E., *Old Fort Crawford and the Frontier*, 29.

¹⁰Folwell, Op. Cit., I, 93-94; Neill, E. D., *A History of Minnesota*, 244-45.

Mineral Extraction

Though the first treaty entered into by the United States with the Chippewa nation was signed in 1785,¹¹ the first treaty of particular importance to Minnesota was not negotiated until 1826. Then in a treaty negotiated at Fond du Lac, the Chippewa ceded "the right to search for, and carry away, any metals or minerals from any part of their country."¹²

Land Expansion

With the organization of the Wisconsin territory and the inevitable movement of settlers westward, the demand for cessions of land to be opened for settlements became more insistent. Further negotiations were entered into between the United States government and the Chippewa and Sioux nations. The treaty with the Chippewa was concluded at Fort Snelling in July, 1837,¹³ a treaty with the Sioux at Washington in September of the same year.¹⁴ These treaties, ratified by the Senate on June 15, 1838, opened the area between the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers. The cession included land as far north as Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Pine Counties. In exchange for this land, the United States granted to the Indians annuities in money, goods, and provisions; allowances for the relatives and friends of the chiefs; payments for debts due to traders; and small annual grants for physicians, farmers, and blacksmiths. The money annuity of the Sioux was to be perpetual; that of the Chippewa for twenty years. The Chippewa reserved the right to hunt, fish, and gather wild rice on the lands ceded by them; the Sioux made no reservations.¹⁵ Before the end of the year, the removal of those Indians remaining east of the Mississippi to new homes west of the river was completed at small cost.

In the next decade, further treaties were entered into with both the Sioux and the Chippewa.¹⁶ With the organization of Minnesota as a territory in 1848 and the continued expansion

¹¹*U. S. Statutes at Large*, VII, 16-18.

¹²*Ibid.*, VII, 291.

¹³Winchell, *Op. Cit.*, 619-620.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 620.

¹⁵Folwell, *Op. Cit.*, I, 160.

¹⁶Winchell, *Op. Cit.*, 621-622.

of white settlement, the requests for the alienation of Indian lands demanded attention.¹⁷ Governor Ramsey in his message to the first territorial legislature in September, 1849, urged that body "to memorialize Congress to provide for a treaty of cession with the Sioux."¹⁸

The Retreat Westward

Four important treaties providing for vast transfers of land were negotiated during the decade of the 1850's. The first two of these, known as the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux¹⁹ (July 23, 1851) and the Treaty of Mendota (August 5, 1851),²⁰ provided for the cession of Sioux lands in Iowa and Minnesota west of the Mississippi. The area comprised over 19,000,000 acres in Minnesota, 3,000,000 acres in Iowa, and over 1,750,000 acres in South Dakota.²¹ While some land on the Yellow Medicine River and some on the Minnesota River was reserved to the Indians in these treaties, southern Minnesota was opened to white settlement and the continued development of the area by the settler.

The North Land

The third of these treaties, said to have been a miner's proposition,²² was negotiated in September, 1854, at La Pointe, Wisconsin, with the Chippewa of Lake Superior and the Mississippi. It provided for the cession of that triangle of land lying north of Lake Superior which has its apex at the Pigeon River and its base on the Vermillion, East Swan, and St. Louis Rivers. This treaty initiated the system of allotments for the the Chippewa. Article II provided for the patenting of eighty acres to each mixed-blood over twenty-one years of age who was the head of a family, while Article III made provision for the granting of eighty acres to other Indians. Article III follows:

¹⁷Folwell, *Op. Cit.*, I, 266-268.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, I, 271.

¹⁹Winchell, *Op. Cit.*, 623.

²⁰*Ibid.*, I, 623.

²¹Hughes, Thomas, "The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux in 1851," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, X, Part I, 112.

²²Folwell, *Op. Cit.*, I, 307.

"The United States will define the boundaries of the reserved tracts, whenever it may be necessary, by actual survey, and the President may, from time to time, at his discretion, cause the whole to be surveyed, and may assign to each head of a family or single person over twenty-one years of age, eighty acres of land for his or their separate use; and he may, at his discretion, as fast as the occupants become capable of transacting their own affairs, issue patents therefor to such occupants, with such restrictions of the power of alienation as he may see fit to impose. And he may also, at his discretion, make rules and regulations, respecting the disposition of the lands in case of the death of the head of a family, or single person occupying the same, or in case of its abandonment by them. And he may also assign other lands in exchange for mineral lands, if such be found in tracts herein set apart. . . ."²³

Five months later in another treaty between the United States and the Minnesota Chippewa on February 22, 1855, the Indians ceded lands west of the base of the triangle to the Red River of the North and from the latitude of the mouth of the Crow Wing River to that of Turtle Lake plus a considerable triangle west of the Big Fork River with a narrow apex on the Rainy River. In exchange for these cessions of land the Chippewa received annuity payments in money and goods, presents of guns, ammunition, and clothing, and payment of traders' claims. As in the treaty of 1854, the President was authorized to assign "a reasonable quantity of land, in one body, not to exceed eighty acres in any case" to the head of each family, or single person over twenty-one years of age. These tracts of land were "to be exempt from taxation, levy, sale or forfeiture."²⁴

The Indian Uprising

With the admission of Minnesota to the Union in 1858, the demand for even further cessions of land continued. The presence of Indians on sites directly in the path of the continued westward expansion, the movement of settlers onto reserved Indian lands and the dissatisfaction of the Sioux culminating in the Sioux massacre of 1862 resulted in the further cession and sale of Sioux lands,²⁵ additional cessions of Chippewa lands,²⁶ the removal of the Winnebago Indians from Min-

²³Kappler, Chas. J., (ed.) *Indian Affairs: laws and treaties*, II, 648-649.

²⁴*Ibid.*, II, 686-687.

²⁵Winchell, *Op. Cit.*, 628.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 629-631.

nesota,²⁷ and the provision for the removal of the remaining Sioux tribes to South Dakota.²⁸ Though the dissatisfaction of the Sioux prior to the uprising of 1862 was partially justified, the feeling of the white settler at the time against the Indian was extremely bitter. The demands for reprisals against the Sioux were numerous. The extent of the feeling against the Indians is reflected in orders promising volunteer scouts "compensation of twenty-five dollars for each scalp of a male Sioux Indian delivered by any of them at the office of the adjutant general."²⁹

A Conquered People

The years immediately following the Civil War presaged the development of a new philosophy in working with the Indians. The continued encroachment of the white settler upon Indian land, the inability of the Indian leaders to control their people, the increasing dependence of the group, and the threat of their ultimate extinction foreshadowed the development of policies to terminate the practice of treaty-making, to give every Indian "a home that he can call his own,"³⁰ and to improve existing legislation covering the administration of Indian affairs.

²⁷U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, 658.

²⁸U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, 819.

²⁹Folwell, *Op. Cit.*, II, 289.

³⁰Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 18.

Chapter III

A WARD OF THE GOVERNMENT

In 1869, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in recommending the abandonment of the whole policy of treaty-making, wrote :

A New Doctrine

“ . . . A treaty involves the idea of a compact between two or more sovereign powers, each possessing sufficient authority and force to compel a compliance with the obligations incurred. The Indian tribes of the United States are not sovereign nations, capable of making treaties, as none of them have an organized government of such inherent strength as would secure a faithful obedience of its people in the observance of compacts of this character. They are held to be the wards of the government, and the only title the law concedes to them to the lands they occupy or claim is a mere possessory one. But, because treaties have been made with them, generally for the extinguishment of their supposed absolute title to land inhabited by them, or over which they roam, they have become falsely impressed with the notion of national independence. It is time that this idea should be dispelled, and the government cease the cruel farce of thus dealing with its helpless and ignorant wards. Many good men, looking at this matter only from a Christian point of view, will perhaps say that the poor Indian has been greatly wronged and ill-treated; that this whole country was once his, of which he has been despoiled, and that he has been driven from place to place until he has hardly left to him a spot where to lay his head. This indeed may be philanthropic and humane, but the stern letter of the law admits of no such conclusion, and great injury has been done by the government in deluding this people into the belief of their being independent sovereignties, while they were at the same time recognized only as its dependents and wards. As civilization advances and their possessions of land are required for settlement, such legislation should be granted to them as a

wise, liberal, and just government ought to extend to subjects holding their dependent relation. . . ."³¹

In 1870, another Commissioner of Indian Affairs in considering the problem of individualizing the Indian and of allotting land to them wrote: ". . . The policy of giving to every Indian a home that he can call his own is a wise one, as it induces a strong incentive to him to labor and make every effort in his power to better his condition. By the adoption, generally, of this plan on the part of the Government, the Indians would be more rapidly advanced in civilization than they would if the policy of allowing them to hold their land in common were continued. . . ."³² In the effort to improve the administration of Indian Affairs, a new system of appointing personnel was instituted in 1869 and recommendations were made in 1871 for the revision of the laws governing trade and justice.³³

The Allotment System

With the termination of the treaty-making policy in 1871, the period of agreements began.³⁴ These agreements differed little from the earlier formal treaties; their provisions were essentially the same, but the agreements were ratified by both houses of Congress instead of by the Senate alone.³⁵ With each successive agreement entered into by the Chippewas, the areas of the reservations became smaller until by 1887, when the General Allotment Act³⁶ was passed, their lands were limited to specific tracts in the then unorganized territory of northern Minnesota.

Its Origin

Since the allotment system is frequently said to be one of the primary factors responsible for the present unhappy situation of the Indian in Minnesota, some of the background of that program administered by the Indian office should be considered. The term allotment system has generally been used to

³¹*Ibid.*, 17-18. Quoted from *Rep. Comm. Ind. Aff.*, 1869, 6.

³²*Ibid.*, 18. Quoted from *Rep. Comm. Ind. Aff.*, 1870, 9.

³³*Ibid.*, 20.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 66.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 67.

³⁶*U. S. Statutes at Large*, XXIV, 388.

describe one part in the process of transferring Indian land to white ownership. The origins of the system are to be found in Indian treaties, and as early as 1798, provision was made by treaty for the allotment of tribal land to individuals and families.³⁷ In the beginning of the allotment system, lands upon which an individual or family resided or upon which they had made improvements were reserved for the use of the group. The chiefs or councils might cede an extensive area of land to the United States government but reserve specific tracts for the occupancy or use of individuals or of groups. The Treaty of 1854 with the Chippewa of Lake Superior provided for the allotment of land to individual Indians by the President who was also given the authority to make "rules and regulations, respecting the disposition of the lands in case of the death of the head of a family, . . . or in case of its abandonment by them."³⁸ In the treaty of February, 1855, the Chippewa ceded lands but "reserved" land for permanent homes for the group. This treaty also authorized the President to allot their lands in severalty whenever he deemed it advisable.³⁹

The Sponsor's Motives

Hence the system was well known to Minnesota Indians by the time a growing public opinion in favor of the general allotment of Indian lands presaged the passage of the Dawes Act of 1887. That the results of this General Allotment Act brought undue hardship to the Chippewas cannot be denied, but the proponents of this legislation were said to have been "inspired by the highest motives."⁴⁰ Among the aims of the legislation were the desires to substitute white civilization for Indian culture through the changing of the Indians' concept of property; to enable the Indian to acquire the benefits of civilization; to protect the Indian in his present landholdings; to open up for white settlement surplus lands on the various reservations; and to open up land for white development especially in the building of railroads' right-of-ways.⁴¹

³⁷Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 206.

³⁸Kappler, *Op. Cit.*, II, 649.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 686.

⁴⁰Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 208.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 208-209.

The General Act

The General Allotment Act, also known as the Dawes Act, was passed by Congress on February 8, 1887. Through its provisions, lands were to be allotted to any Indian according to the following stipulation:

To each head of a family, one-quarter of a section or 160 acres.

To each single person over eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section or 80 acres.

To each orphan child under eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section or 80 acres.

To each other single person under eighteen years of age living at that time or to be born prior to the date of the order of the President directing an allotment of the lands embraced on any reservation, one-sixteenth of a section or 40 acres.⁴²

The Indians were permitted to select their own allotment, heads of families for their minor children, and the United States agent for each orphan child. Some Minnesota Chippewa Indians took their allotments under this Act.⁴³

The Act of January 14, 1889 — "An act for the relief and civilization of the Chippewa Indians of the State of Minnesota," sometimes called the Nelson Act—was passed on January 14, 1889.⁴⁴ It provided for the appointment, by the President, of a commission of three men, to negotiate with all the bands of Chippewa in Minnesota for the cession of their remaining lands in Minnesota except the White Earth and Red Lake reservations; and for as much of these two reservations as was not needed to provide allotments for the Minnesota Chippewa was to be ceded. The Red Lake Indians were to be allotted on the Red Lake Reservation; all others, on the White Earth. The Act was to become effective on all reservations except on the Red Lake, upon the written consent of two-thirds of all adult males over eighteen years of age in the band occupying the reservation. On the Red Lake Reservation, it was to become effective upon the written consent of two-thirds of the male adults of all the Chippewa of Minnesota.

⁴²U. S. Statutes at Large, XXIV, 388.

⁴³Hilger, Sister M. Inez, *A Social Study of One Hundred Fifty Chippewa Indian Families of the White Earth Reservation of Minnesota*, 7.

⁴⁴Kappler, *Op. Cit.*, I, 301.

The Act further provided that the ceded lands were to be surveyed and sub-divided into forty-acre lots and classified as "pine lands" or as "agricultural lands." The former were to be surveyed, appraised, and sold at public auction, notices being inserted once each week for four successive weeks in one newspaper of general circulation in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Crookston, Minnesota; Chicago, Illinois; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Detroit, Michigan; Philadelphia and Williamsport, Pennsylvania; and Boston, Massachusetts. The agricultural lands were to be disposed of under the homestead law at a price of \$1.25 per acre.

All money accruing from the disposal of lands, after deducting the expenses connected with carrying out the provisions of the Act, was to be deposited with the Treasury of the United States to the credit of all the Chippewa of Minnesota, drawing five per cent interest for fifty years after the last allotments had been made. Three-fourths of the interest was to be distributed annually in per capita payments, and one-fourth was "to be devoted exclusively to the establishment and maintenance of a system of free schools among said Indians, in their midst and for their benefit." At the end of the fifty years, the permanent fund was to be distributed, in equal shares, to all Minnesota Chippewa then enrolled.⁴⁵

A number of individuals took advantage of another provision in the Act that stipulated that no Chippewa of Minnesota was to be deprived of an allotment already made without his consent and that any Indian might, in his discretion, take his allotment upon the reservation where he was living at the time of the removal of the tribe or band. As a result the Chippewa of Minnesota today are found not only on the White Earth and Red Lake reservations but also on the Leech Lake, Nett Lake, Vermillion, Grand Portage, and Fond du Lac reservations.⁴⁶

To the fund, now known as the Chippewa of Minnesota Fund, which has been accruing from the sale of timber permitted by the Act, have been added sums arising from the sale

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 302-306.

⁴⁶Kinney, J. P., *A Continent Lost—A Civilization Won; Indian Land Tenure in America*, 229.

of town sites. Periodically, annuity and per capita payments, drawn on the fund, are issued to the Indians on the roll. The most recent issues were a per capita payment made in May of 1934 amounting to \$25 per person, and an annuity payment of \$10 per person in June of 1941.⁴⁷

Sale of Timber

X (Though the Chippewa of Minnesota had entered into contracts for the sale of timber from lands they occupied as early as 1861, it was not until the 1880's that large quantities of timber were sold by the various bands of Minnesota Indians. Then with Departmental authority the Red Lake and White Earth Indians sold millions of feet of burned and wind-thrown timber. Later various acts of Congress authorized the sale of dead timber from tribal and allotted lands in Minnesota and of all timber from ceded Chippewa lands separate from the land and on the scale. In 1901, the Grand Portage band was authorized to sell timber from its allotments and in 1904 all of the Minnesota Chippewa were privileged to do so.⁴⁸ Lumber companies eagerly bought this timber, the Indians realizing neither its value nor use. With the sale of timber, it has been said, boom days began for the Minnesota Chippewas.⁴⁹ In 1906, through the provisions of the Clapp Act, all restrictions upon the sale of allotments of land held by mixed bloods on the White Earth reservation were removed.⁵⁰

The Landless Indian

The years immediately following the passage of these laws witnessed a sharp rise in the sale of timber rights and in allotment sales. The Indians were paid large sums of money some receiving as high as \$20,000. But the money that was paid so easily was spent with equal facility, and within a few years the Indians on the White Earth Reservation found themselves landless and without money.

⁴⁷Records of the Consolidated Chippewa Agency at Cass Lake, Minnesota.

⁴⁸Kinney, *Op. Cit.*, 254-262 *passim*.

⁴⁹Hilger, *Op. Cit.*, 9.

⁵⁰Kinney, *Op. Cit.*, 262.

Another provision of the Clapp Act that contributed to the confusion and later hardship of the White Earth Indians specified that twenty-five years after passage of the bill all mixed-blood allotments became fee patents and hence taxable. Thus allotments not sold often became tax delinquent and reverted to the state. Still other Indians lost their land through mortgage foreclosures.⁵¹ The extent to which the White Earth Indians became landless is reflected in statistics published in 1939 showing that "In 1934 only one in every twelve Chippewa on the White Earth Reservation owned his original allotment" and that "In 1938 probably fewer than four hundred Indians of a total population of eight thousand owned any land; most of them were squatters or renters."⁵² The loss of land to the Indians as a result of the various acts mentioned above was great, and included the most desirable of the lands they had formerly held. Consequently today, in spite of the federal government's recent purchases of land for Indians, many find themselves landless and others still hold title to land which is valueless.

During the years 1884 to 1917, various acts were passed by Congress to provide for those Sioux Indians who had remained in or returned to Minnesota after the Indian Massacre of 1862.⁵³ These acts provided for the purchase of lands for the various bands of Sioux in Minnesota, who have continued to reside on these tracts or near them since that time. For the most part, these purchased lands were allotted or assigned to various individuals or families; these allotments and assignments were small, ranging in size from five to twenty-three acres, depending upon the land. As with the Chippewas, much of the allotted land was dissipated through the issuance of competency papers.⁵⁴

⁵¹Hilger, *Op. Cit.*, 9-10.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 10.

⁵³*U. S. Statutes at Large* XXV, 228-229; 992; XXXIX, 1195-1196.

⁵⁴McKinsey, Shirley, *An Economic Survey of the Lower Sioux Indian Community, Morton, Minnesota*, 2-3; Sherman, Clyde G., *An Economic Survey of the Prairie Island Indian Community in Minnesota*, 4.

Chapter IV

A NEW FEDERAL POLICY

The Wheeler-Howard Act

The Wheeler-Howard Act, generally considered one of the three most significant laws⁵⁵ affecting the lives of Indians, was approved on June 18, 1934.⁵⁶ The purposes of this Act, as set forth by Senator Wheeler, were:

- "1. To stop the alienation, through action by the Government or the Indian, of such lands, belonging to ward Indians, as are needed for the present and future support of these Indians.
- "2. To provide for the acquisition, through purchase, of land for Indians, now landless, who are anxious and fitted to make a living on such land.
- "3. To stabilize the tribal organization of Indian tribes by vesting such tribal organizations with real, though limited, authority, and by prescribing conditions which must be met by such tribal organizations.
- "4. To permit Indian tribes to equip themselves with the devices of modern business organization, through forming themselves into business corporations.
- "5. To establish a system of financial credit for Indians.
- "6. To supply Indians with means for collegiate and technical training in the best schools.
- "7. To open the way for qualified Indians to hold positions in the Federal Indian Service."⁵⁷

As finally approved, this Act, known as the Indian Reorganization Act, prohibited future allotments and the sale of Indian lands except by tribes; authorized annual appropriations for the purchase of land for landless Indians; enabled Indians to return their holdings to tribal status where they would be protected; authorized the establishment of a revolving credit and loan fund; authorized loans to Indians for school purposes; provided for establishment of standards for appoint-

⁵⁵The other two laws so considered are the Act of June 30, 1834, which provided for the organization of the Department of Indian Affairs and the General Allotment Act of February 8, 1887.

⁵⁶U. S. Statutes at Large, XLVIII, 984.

⁵⁷Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 84, quoted from Sen. Rept. No. 1080, 73rd Cong. 2nd. sess. May 10 (calendar day, May 22), 1934.

ment to the Indian service and for the preferential appointment of Indians meeting these standards without regard to civil service; and established a basis for the organization and management of local self-government.⁵⁸ None of the provisions of this Act were to be applicable to any reservation upon which a majority of the Indians voted against its application.

Reorganization in Minnesota

With the exception of the Red Lake Indians residing on the Red Lake Reservation, the various Indians in Minnesota availed themselves of the privileges of the Reorganization Act. The Chippewa residing at the White Earth, Nett Lake, Leech Lake, Grand Portage, Fond du Lac, and Mille Lacs Reservations organized under the corporate title of the Minnesota Chippewa tribe, while the various Sioux residing in separate communities in southern Minnesota organized as individual communities.

The purpose and function of the organizations as stated in the constitutions of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and the Lower Sioux Indian Community, the largest group of the Sioux residing in the state, follow:

" . . . to conserve and develop tribal resources and to promote the conservation and development of individual Indian trust property ; to promote the general welfare of the members of the tribe ; to preserve and maintain justice for its members and otherwise exercise all powers granted and provided the Indians and to take advantage of the privileges afforded by the Act of June 18, 1934 . . . "⁵⁹ and

" . . . develop our natural resources, insure our domestic tranquility, promote the general welfare, to enjoy certain rights of home rule, to provide education in schools of higher learning including vocational trade, high schools, and colleges for our people, and to secure the opportunities offered us under the Indian Reorganization Act. . . . "⁶⁰

⁵⁸Kinney, *Op. Cit.*, 310-313.

⁵⁹Constitution and By-Laws of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1.

⁶⁰Constitution and By-Laws of the Lower Sioux Indian Community in Minnesota, 1.

Why not? This has been a real failure -
abolish
H. S. 1932
To what extent the functioning of these tribal organizations has been effective is unknown and cannot be determined here. Undoubtedly, future legislation will seek to improve and strengthen the law; its importance in this report lies in its providing the Indians concerned with the opportunity to take over the control of their own resources. No longer will the planning for the group be the sole responsibility of the federal government; rather, the planning will be the joint responsibility of the organized and responsible tribe and the Indian Service.

Federal-State Cooperation

Before concluding this brief history of the Indian in Minnesota, two other laws effecting the relationship of the Indian to the state should be mentioned. The first of these, which will be considered later in this report, is the Act of June 2, 1924,⁶¹ by which all Indians became citizens of the United States and hence of Minnesota. The second is the Johnson-O'Malley Act of April 16, 1934,⁶² which authorized the United States Office of Indian Affairs to make contracts with the various states for services to Indians in the fields of education, health, and social welfare, including the relief of distress. This Act was passed partially as a result of the criticism that the standards of social service in the Indian Bureau were in large part inferior to those of parallel state agencies. At the present time the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota Department of Health, and the Minnesota Division of Social Welfare are making definite efforts to work with the federal government in rendering service to the Indian people of the state. The Department of Education, through a contractual agreement, disburses federal funds to public schools in which Indians are being taught. The Department of Health maintains services on all the reservations as well as the Chippewa Health Unit at Cass Lake. The Division of Social Welfare supervises the various welfare programs providing assistance and service to the Indians and, through a contract with the Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency, provides care to Indians at the State Sanatorium at Ah-Gwah-Ching.

⁶¹U. S. Statutes at Large, XLIII, 253.

⁶²U. S. Statutes at Large, XLVIII, 596.

Chapter V

THE INDIAN'S PLACE IN MINNESOTA TODAY

The Indian population in Minnesota today is dispersed throughout the state. The United States census of 1940 records Indians residing in 37 of the 87 counties. In twelve of these counties the population is negligible, numbering less than twenty-five persons; in five other counties, including Ramsey County, the population is less than one hundred persons. The rest of the population, with the exception of those residing in Hennepin County, live in those northern or southern counties which either include Indian reservations within their limits or lie adjacent to these Indian reservations.⁶³ While the concentration of Indian persons in certain communities is still marked, it should be remembered that an Indian is free to come and go as he chooses. The former regulations requiring Indians to secure the Agent's permission to leave the reservation have not been in effect for many years.

I. INDIAN COMMUNITIES AND RESERVATIONS

The location of these reservations is important to any consideration of the present population, their life and their economic opportunities. There are eight Indian reservations and five Indian communities in Minnesota.⁶⁴ These are under the jurisdiction of three Indian agencies — the Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency at Cass Lake, the Red Lake Indian Agency at Red Lake, and the Pipestone Indian Agency at Pipestone, Minnesota. A brief description of the Indian communities and reservations follows:

THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA INDIAN AGENCY has its headquarters at Cass Lake, Minnesota. This agency has jurisdiction over seven separate reservations which formerly were administered as separate jurisdictions. Although all

⁶³*Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population (second series), Characteristics of the Population, Minnesota, 79.*

⁶⁴Though the terms reservation and community are often used interchangeably in Minnesota today for purposes of this paper the term reservation refers to lands "reserved" in early treaties and held continuously by the Chippewa Indians. The term community is used to refer to Sioux Indian holdings in the southern part of the state.



seven reservations are located in northern Minnesota, they differ quite widely as to soil, employment opportunities, transportation facilities, available markets, and so forth. For this reason, it seems advisable to consider separately the various units managed by this agency.

FOND DU LAC reservation is located in St. Louis and Carlton Counties, approximately 30 miles west of Duluth. This reservation was formerly in the center of the heavily timbered area of Minnesota. Although this area has been largely cut over and the second growth of timber has been burned over by severe and repeated fires, large portions of it are now covered with young trees and brush.

A few farms have been cleared out of this brushy stump land, but many of these so-called farms furnish only a place for a family to live and a portion of their subsistence. Too frequently a varying portion of the family income has been derived from labor in nearby towns, from relief, or from WPA projects.

A second means of securing a livelihood is derived from employment in the wood product and paper mills, many of which were established in the area while timber was still plentiful. For the most part, however, the local forest products are now confined to pulpwood, firewood, fence posts and poles.

While potatoes and rutabagas are the leading cash crop for farmers in the area, few Indians derive any income from this source. Most farmers sell a little dairy produce, though the pastures are poor and grazing is very limited on the reservation. A few cultivated berries are produced in the area.

Though many tourists pass through this section of Minnesota, the area cannot be considered a principal resort area of the state.

GRAND PORTAGE reservation is located on the north shore of Lake Superior. It lies wholly within Cook County and is approximately 150 miles from Duluth.

The area included in the Grand Portage reservation is one of the most remote in the United States. There are no railroads

in the area ; the only means of transportation is provided by the highway from Duluth to the Canadian border.

As on the Fond du Lac reservation, the area is cut over and repeated forest fires have stripped large areas of valuable timber. There are no large-scale logging operations at the present time, although cordwood, pulpwood, posts, poles, and other timber are produced by small operators.

Commercial fishing is carried on all along the north shore of Lake Superior. Most of the local fisherman operate as individuals, small groups, or family businesses selling their catch to fish companies.

The tourist trade and resort business, which has developed considerably in the last ten years, offers some employment.

THE BOIS FORT OR NETT LAKE reservation is located in Koochiching and St. Louis Counties approximately thirty-five miles south of International Falls. The reservation lies in a sparsely-populated timbered region approximately half way between the Mesabe Iron Range and International Falls.

Though the virgin timber is largely gone and what remains is rapidly being cut, the pulpwood industry still secures large stocks of timber from the area.

Since the region lies outside the general tourist area, about the only tourists attracted here are duck and big game hunters.

The area is poorly adapted to agriculture; there is little good agricultural land on the reservation.

THE VERMILLION RESERVATION, usually considered with the Bois Fort or Nett Lake Reservation, lies wholly within St. Louis County. It is approximately ninety-two miles north of Duluth and about six miles from Tower, Minnesota. This reservation was set aside by the federal government for the use of the Bois Fort Indians.

THE MILLE LACS RESERVATION is located in Mille Lacs, Aitkin, and Pine Counties. The land in Mille Lacs County lies near the west shore of the lake and near the town

of Isle not far from the southwest extremity of Lake Mille Lacs. The land in Aitkin County consists of the southwest quarter of Section 31, Township 43 North, Range 24 West. The land in Pine County is approximately forty miles south and slightly west of Duluth. It is directly across the St. Croix River from Danbury, Wisconsin.

The country surrounding the Mille Lacs reservation lies in that section of Minnesota which borders on a general farming area to the south and the cut-over area of northeastern Minnesota. The land on the reservation does not lend itself particularly to farming.

Timber work on the reservation and in the nearby area consists largely of cutting firewood and other small wood.

The area is a popular resort area and attracts many tourists. The Indian population derives a small income from this tourist trade through the sale of handicraft products, such as birch bark and bead work.

The Danbury area in Pine County is largely cut over. The soil is sandy, rocky, and not adapted to agriculture.

THE LEECH LAKE RESERVATION lies in Beltrami, Cass and Itasca Counties. This reservation includes the Indian communities of Cass Lake, Leech Lake, Onigum, Winnibigoshish, and White Oak.

The Leech Lake reservation and the Chippewa National Forest lie within almost identical boundaries. Most of the land not owned by the Indians within the area belongs to the National Forest. Though the area is largely cut over, such virgin timber as remains is under the control of the Forestry Department. Some logging is done by small operators; pulpwood, poles, mine timbers, and firewood are also cut. Practically every farmer in the area receives some portion of his gross income from timber work.

Agriculture is a minor industry. The soil in certain parts of the reservation is not very good. Many farms are no longer used for agricultural purposes, but still serve as homes for the owners or squatters.

The tourist trade is an important industry in the section. The maintenance and operation of tourist camps, resorts, and so forth is a principal occupation in the area.

THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION is located in Mahnomen, Becker, and Clearwater Counties and lies north of the city of Detroit Lakes. It lies east of the Red River Valley.

The western half of the reservation is devoted to dairy and general farming; the eastern half lies within the cut-over area, where the soil is of low fertility and not particularly suited to general agriculture.

Many tourists visit this section of the state, particularly around Detroit Lakes. However, few tourists spend much time within the limits of the reservation. The timber industry in this section is limited largely to the cutting of posts and firewood. The wood is used locally or sold in Moorhead or Fargo.⁶⁵

THE RED LAKE RESERVATION, administered through the Red Lake Indian Agency, located in Beltrami and Clearwater Counties, is unlike the other seven reservations in Minnesota since it is a closed reservation; that is, the land has not yet been allotted. The land surface of the reservation comprises 573,238 acres, of which 100,000 lie within the Red Lake Indian Forest. Of the remaining acreage lying outside the forest area, about 72,000 acres has been classed as bog land so level and swampy that it cannot be used without drainage. Some 30,000 acres of the remaining land can be used for agricultural purposes.

This reservation lies in the sparsely populated timbered area approximately thirty-five miles from Bemidji and sixty miles from Baudette. Timber is still one of the major industries of the reservation, and a saw mill and a logging camp operate there. At the present time, cordwood, posts, poles, and other timber are produced and sold by individuals.

Commercial fishing is carried on at Red Lake, and the catch is shipped to Chicago. A few Indians each season in-

⁶⁵Asbury, F. A., *An Economic Survey of the Consolidated Chippewa Jurisdiction in Minnesota*, 1-13.

crease their income by working at the state-operated hatchery and by cutting ice.⁶⁶

THE SIOUX INDIANS in the southern part of the state today are located in five distinct communities administered by the Pipestone Indian School Agency located at Pipestone, Minnesota. These communities include the Lower Sioux Indians at Morton, the Prairie Island Indians, the Prior Lake Indians at Shakopee, the Upper Sioux Indians at Granite Falls, and those who reside at the Pipestone reservation. The Wabasha Sioux Reservation in Wabasha County is also under the jurisdiction of the Pipestone Agency; however, since no Indians reside on this land, no further consideration will be given this reservation in this report.

THE LOWER SIOUX INDIAN COMMUNITY, comprising 1,734 acres, is located in Redwood County. It is two miles southwest of Morton on the south bank of the Minnesota River. Transportation to the community is good; there are both highway and railroad facilities. The land is sandy, gravelly, and underlaid with a heavy clay stratum. It is fairly fertile and produces good crops of corn, rye, and small grain in years of sufficient rainfall.

While some of the Indians are engaged in farming, the majority derive their income from day labor, the sale of handicraft, and leases. That these opportunities are somewhat limited is evident, since the land is very limited, since few engage in farming, and since little other employment is available in the community.⁶⁷ Probably a higher percentage of Indians are self-supporting through agriculture in this community than in any other in the state.

THE PRAIRIE ISLAND INDIAN COMMUNITY, which includes some 534 acres, is located on the eastern boundary of the state in Goodhue County adjacent to the west bank of the Mississippi River, fourteen miles north of Red Wing. The community is not easily accessible because of poor roads and bridges over which one travels at his own risk.

⁶⁶Annual Report, Red Lake Indian Agency, 1939. 10.

⁶⁷McKinsey, Op. Cit., 4, 14-15, 21.

While the majority of these Indians raise small gardens to supplement their income, their other means of support is derived from the manufacture of Indian handicraft, from day labor, and from trapping.⁶⁸ During the past four years several of these Indians left the reservation to accept employment in defense work; they are now returning to the Island, where the employment opportunities are definitely limited.

THE PRIOR LAKE INDIAN COMMUNITY consists of 258 acres approximately twelve miles southeast of Shakopee.⁶⁹ Not only is the Indian land in this community very limited, but it is divided into four tracts. The population is small, numbering but twenty-one persons in the 1940 census. There are very few houses on the reservation; most of the people reside in Shakopee.

THE UPPER SIOUX INDIAN COMMUNITY located two miles south of Granite Falls in Yellow Medicine County consists of 746 acres⁷⁰ of good farm land. The community is easily accessible through a system of good roads (built by the Indian Service in the community) which connect with both county and state highways. The principal sources of income for this group are farming, the sale of handicraft, and day labor. Like other groups of Chippewa and Sioux Indians, some of the Upper Sioux left the reservation to enter military service and defense work. They are, however, now returning to the community, where the employment opportunities will be seasonal and limited but where they can engage in farming.

THE INDIAN COMMUNITY AT PIPESTONE, located just one mile out of that city, consists of 532 acres administered in connection with the Indian school, which is a boarding school.⁷¹ The economic life of the Indians residing in this community is centered around the agency, which provides some employment. Other sources of income are provided through the sale of handicraft, particularly bead work and articles made from pipestone to be found in the quarry there, through day labor, and through very limited employment in the city.

⁶⁸Shirley, *Op. Cit.*, 13-15.

⁶⁹Statistical Supplement, to the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1945, 23.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 23.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 23

II. POPULATION STATISTICS

That the Indian is not a vanishing race in Minnesota is clearly evident from a study of the United States census for the past two decades. The Indian population of the state, including both Chippewa and Sioux, in 1920, was 8,761 persons⁷²; that of 1930 was 11,077 persons; and that of 1940 was 12,528 persons.⁷³

Minnesota Indian Population in 1920, 1930 and 1940

Data from the Bureau of the Census



⁷²Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Population, III, Table I, 504.

⁷³Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Op. Cit., 79.

It is important to note that during the decade 1920 to 1930, there was an increase of 26.4 per cent over the population at the beginning of the period. During the decade 1930 to 1940, there was an increase of 13.1 per cent over the population at the beginning of this period. During the twenty-year period, there was a total of 43 per cent increase over the population figure for 1920. Thus, while it is evident that the Indian population of the state is steadily increasing, the rate of increase in the last decade is but half the rate for the earlier decade; in other words, it can be concluded that the rate of increase of the population is decreasing.

Chippewa Population

The Minnesota Chippewas constitute over 90 per cent of the Indian population in the state. These people, residing for the most part in northern Minnesota both on and off the reservations, are concentrated in Indian communities in Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Mahnomen, Mille Lacs, Pine, and St. Louis Counties. The Indian population in these counties as reported in the United States census for 1920, 1930, and 1940, follows:

**Minnesota Chippewa Indian Population by Counties
in 1920, 1930 and 1940⁷⁴**

County	Indian Population in			Per Cent Increase	
	1920	1930	1940	1920-30	1930-40
Total	8,240	9,721	11,247	18.0	15.7
Aitkin	84	103	112	22.6	8.7
Becker	1,694	1,880	2,138	11.0	13.7
Beltrami	1,580	1,961	2,521	24.1	28.6
Carlton	430	486	532	13.0	9.5
Cass	1,022	1,304	1,757	27.6	34.7
Clearwater	357	461	399	29.1	-13.5
Cook	186	191	314	2.7	64.4
Itasca	448	490	666	9.4	35.9
Koochiching	99	154	175	55.6	13.6
Mahnomen	1,405	1,612	1,414	14.7	-12.3
Mille Lacs	278	298	361	7.2	21.2
Pine	198	186	250	-6.1	34.4
St. Louis	459	595	608	29.6	2.2

⁷⁴Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920 Op. Cit., III, Table 7. 507; Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Characteristics of the Population, 2nd Series, 79.

Mixed blood *see p. 140 of "Red Man"*
The most striking feature to be noted in a study of these census reports is the continued increase in the total Chippewa population. This rise is reflected in eleven counties, even though a decrease is shown in the populations of Clearwater and Mahnomen Counties. These decreases may be explained in terms of the migration of certain families and individual persons during the period of the depression when the availability of work on relief projects made for some movement to sites nearer these projects and to the Agency offices. In examining the continued total increase in the Chippewa population in the counties mentioned, it may be noted that there has been a total increase of 36.45 per cent in the group for the period 1920 to 1940. The rise in the population from 1920 to 1930 was 17.97 per cent over the 1920 figure, while the increase from 1930 to 1940 was 15.7 per cent over the 1930 figure. This may be considered as a slight fall in the rate of increase in the latter decade.

Current population figures for Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth are not available. The census report of 1940 can no longer be considered accurate because of the movement of several thousand Indian persons into the cities during the war period to accept defense work. At the present time, estimates of the population range from 2,800 persons to 6,000 persons. Because of the migration of many families back to the reservations within the past year, it is probable that the lower figure of 2,800 is more nearly correct. The Indian population of the city of Duluth changes often because of the movement of people from the nearby Fond du Lac reservation into that city.

Sioux Population

A study of the Sioux population, as it is concentrated in the Indian communities within the jurisdiction of the Pipestone Indian Agency, indicates that this group is numerically much smaller than the Chippewas. However, the rate of increase of this population is much greater than is that of the Chippewa. In Goodhue, Pipestone, Redwood, and Yellow Medicine Counties, where the Indian communities at Prairie Island, Pipestone, Morton, and Granite Falls are located, the population in

1181 in the Consolidated Chippewa Agency.
1920 numbered 271 persons and in 1940 some 548 persons—an increase of 102.2 per cent. A further breakdown of the two decades from 1920 to 1930 and from 1930 to 1940 indicates that the rate of increase during the earlier decade was 36.8 per cent, whereas that of the latter was 47.6 per cent. It is important to notice that the Sioux population is not only growing but increasing at an increasing rate.

Because the seasonal migration of many Indian families raises a question about the validity of statistics already discussed, further consideration should be given to the characteristics of the population. This can best be done through an analysis of the populations residing permanently on the reservations or of those persons whose movement is limited to short absences from their homes during the "ricing" season, during the berrying season, and during that period each year when work is available in the woods or when the tourist trade with its potential market makes for some movement to more accessible locations.

A Young Population

Such a further study of the population points up once more the two principal characteristics of the group, namely its continually increasing numbers and its youthfulness. Both of these are of grave importance in a consideration of any planning for the group.

Though the official population figures of the Indian office differ from those of the United States census, a study of its statistics reflects the same pattern; namely, that of a continually increasing population. The annual reports of vital statistics of Indians living on the reservation at the consolidated Chippewa jurisdiction indicate that the population there increased from 9,562 in 1939 to 10,607 in 1945.⁷⁵ The population on the reservation has, therefore, increased 10.95 per cent during the six-year period.

Since the period from 1939 to 1945 is short and since no evaluation can be made of the effect of the war upon the

⁷⁵Statement of Superintendent of Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency based on unpublished agency report on Vital Statistics for 1945.

increase in population, no conclusions can be made with respect to the present rates of increase on the reservations. It can only be said that the rate of increase from 1939 to 1942 was greater than the rate of increase from 1942 to 1945. Such a trend, contrary to that of the white population during the war years, does not alter the prevailing pattern of a continually increasing population.

Another source of information available in considering the population characteristics of the group is found in the case records of the Indian people who were known to the county welfare boards from 1933 to the present. Since eligibility to receive assistance is based in part upon settlement within the state and in the county which provides that service, the receiving of relief on a resident basis reflects the stability of the group so far as their location in counties is concerned. Although dependency is discussed in another part of this report, it may be mentioned here that over 88 per cent of the Indian population in northern Minnesota were known to the county welfare boards and were receiving some kind of public assistance during the year 1939.⁷⁶ The age range of this group as recorded on applications for assistance is available. The age range of Chippewa Indians known to the county welfare boards and residing in those counties in northern Minnesota included in the so-called Indian country follows:

Age Distribution of Chippewa Indians Known to the County Welfare Boards in July, 1939

Age of Chippewa Indians in Years	Chippewa Indians Number	Proportion
Total	10,445	100.0
Under 10 years.....	2,941	28.1
10-18	2,449	23.5
18-24	1,513	14.6
24-60	2,189	20.9
60 years and older.....	1,353	12.9

Some 66.2 per cent of the Indian population receiving public assistance were then less than 24 years of age, the age limit established for the various federal youth programs. Again

⁷⁶Minnesota Division of Social Welfare, *Report on Indian Welfare, 1939-1940*, 24.

the fact that some 2,941 children or 28.1 per cent of the 10,445 Chippewas known to the welfare boards were less than 10 years of age points up the two characteristics of the population; namely, its natural increase and its youthfulness. Some 50.8 per cent of these children were less than six years of age or were born after 1933, when the federal emergency aid programs were first administered in these counties.

Chapter VI

REMNANTS OF TREATY RIGHTS

On November 18, 1946, the Minneapolis Star-Journal reported in a brief news article that "the Minnesota Chippewa Indians 'have laid aside their pipe of peace and decided to seek United Nations aid in the restoration of their sovereign rights' to hunt, fish, and trap as of old."⁷⁷ On the following day, the Minneapolis Tribune reported that "The Chippewas have indicated they will base their appeal for recognition as a sovereign minor nation on that they have received recognition in the past by treaties between the United States and their tribe and also on the grounds of inherent rights held before the coming of the white man."⁷⁸

The Minneapolis Star-Journal of December 2, 1946 reported that "Minnesota's Chippewa Indians, incensed over what they term unfair legislation to settle their claims, may seek United Nations aid as an oppressed nation."⁷⁹ The present chief of the Mississippi Band of the Chippewas, the article continues, feels that the \$50,000,000 evaluation placed upon Chippewa land and property assets by the treaty of 1889 was insufficient and that the Indian Claims Commission established by Congress last August 3 has been inoperative.

Scope of Treaties

Since subsequent news releases have discussed the planning and possibility of such an appeal, it is perhaps advisable

⁷⁷Minneapolis Star-Journal, November 18, 1946, 18.

⁷⁸Minneapolis Tribune, November 19, 1946, 9.

⁷⁹Minneapolis Star-Journal, December 2, 1946, 8.

to consider some aspects of the Indian treaties. The scope of the treaties entered into between the United States government and the Chippewas was broad. The treaties recognized the Chippewas as a dependent nation, provided protection to their peoples, and confirmed the congressional authority to legislate for them. Other provisions regulated trade with the Indians, established trading posts, assumed obligations of the Indians, provided for financial payments and services to the Indians, provided for the administration of justice on reserved land and guaranteed certain rights of hunting, fishing, ricing, and making sugar there. The Indians, on their part, ceded vast tracts of land and granted the right of passage through Indian lands to individuals and railroads, the right to search for and carry away minerals, and the right to allot land which in some cases was to be exempt from taxation.⁸⁰

These treaties or reciprocal agreements were entered into by the federal government and various Indian tribes during the so-called treaty-making period. Today, these treaties constitute one principal source of present day Indian law. The use of the treaty in dealing with Indians was discontinued by the Appropriation Act of 1871, which declared . . . "That hereafter no Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe, or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty. . . ." That this change in treating with the Indians did not effect the earlier obligations was specifically provided in the Act: ". . . nothing herein contained shall be construed to invalidate or impair the obligation of any treaty heretofore lawfully made and ratified. . . ." ⁸¹

Validity of Treaties

The validity of some of these treaties had been questioned prior to the passage of the Appropriation Act of 1871. The grounds for this questioning was the fact that Indian tribes were not independent nations. That these treaties were valid had been clearly established in several court decisions. In 1852, for example, the Circuit Court for the Michigan district

⁸⁰Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 38-46.

⁸¹U. S. Statutes at Large, XVI, 566.

had ruled "... It is contended that a treaty with Indian tribes has not the same dignity or effect, as a treaty with a foreign or independent nation. This distinction is not authorized by the constitution. Since the commencement of the government, treaties have been made with Indians and the treaty-making power has been exercised in making them. They are treaties, within the meaning of the constitution, and, as such, are the supreme law of the land."⁸²

That Congress has upon occasion through legislation repealed, modified, or disregarded some Indian treaties has made for further misunderstanding. The fact that Congress has such authority is established both in foreign affairs and in Indian affairs.⁸³ For instance, in the case of *Lone Wolf vs. Hitchcock*, the Supreme Court ruled: "... Until the year 1871 the policy was pursued of dealing with the Indian tribes by means of treaties, and, of course, a moral obligation rested upon Congress to act in good faith in performing the stipulations entered into on its behalf. But as with treaties made with foreign powers, "*Chinese Exclusion Act Case*" 130 U. S. 581,-600, the legislative power might pass laws in conflict with treaties made with the Indians."⁸⁴

Court of Claims

In those instances when Congress through legislation has modified or even set aside a treaty obligation, redress has been available to the Indians. Many claims have been submitted to the United States Court of Claims; many of these claims were settled. Others remained unheard and hence not settled because of the difficulties encountered by tribes in having their claims presented. These difficulties arose because the United States cannot be sued without its consent; hence, if a tribe were to present a claim or sue the United States, specific authority had to be given to the Court by terms of an act of Congress. The terms of such legislation were usually limited and granted jurisdiction to the Court of Claims to hear and

⁸²Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 34 Quoted from *Turner V. American Baptist Missionary Union*, 24 *Fed. Cas. No. 14251 (C.C. Mich. 1852)*.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 34.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 34-35. Quoted from 187 U. S. 553, 565-566 (1903).

determine specific claims of specific tribes. In some instances, the Court was given authority to make a final judgment and, in others, to report its findings to Congress.

Other difficulties arose because of the problem of securing evidence which would be acceptable in Court. With the passage of time, many of the older Indians who were more familiar with circumstances leading to some of the treaties died. Other claims based upon moral obligations, even though they were or seemed equitable, were not acceptable from a legal point of view and hence were never adjudicated.

Probably every recognized tribe or group of Indians in the United States today has at some time or another submitted a claim against the United States under provisions of former treaties or agreements. The Minnesota Chippewas have submitted several claims, some of which remain unsettled.

The Indian Claims Commission

These claims can now be submitted to an Indian Claims Commission which was created by the Indian Claims Commission Act of August 13, 1946. This law authorizes the Commission to hear and determine Indian claims legal and equitable, or moral, for a period of five years after the date of the approval of the Act or up to August 13, 1951. Among the claims that may be heard involving Minnesota Chippewas is that of the Pillager Band of Chippewas and that of the Mississippi Band of the Chippewas. The first of these claims involves the territory in the Long Prairie country comprising 700,000 acres of land which the Pillagers say they loaned to the United States, but which the United States has contended was purchased.⁸⁵ A second involves claims out of the perpetual fishing and hunting rights of the Indians on lands reserved to them. The Minnesota Chippewas maintain that their rights are being violated by game wardens in the various counties.⁸⁶

To what extent the final disposition of these claims will affect the day to day living of the Indian population is unknown. That it should make for a better relationship with the

⁸⁵*The Minnesota Chippewa Bulletin*, 96, October 24, 1946, 11.

⁸⁶*Minneapolis Star-Journal*, November 18, 1946, 18.

various governmental agencies seems evident, for it will remove the cause of some of the feeling engendered over the years by treaties which were not always understood by the Indians at the time they were negotiated and which have operated to the disadvantage of the population.

Chapter VII

MODERN CIVIL RIGHTS

I. SOURCE OF CITIZENSHIP

By Act of Congress on June 2, 1924, all Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States became citizens. This Act specifically provided:

"That all non-citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States be, and they are hereby, declared to be citizens of the United States: Provided, that the granting of such citizenship shall not in any manner impair or otherwise affect the right of any Indian to tribal or other property."⁸⁷

The passage of this Act clarified the status of those Indians in Minnesota who had not previously secured citizenship through marriage to white men, through military service, through receipt of allotments, or through special treaties or statutes.

Because there has been considerable misunderstanding about the citizenship status of Indians before and after the Citizenship Act of 1924, it is advisable to consider briefly the various ways in which an Indian might have obtained citizenship rights prior to 1924. Some Minnesota Indians had become citizens through each of these processes. While some early treaties between the United States and various Indian tribes provided for the granting of citizenship, others made the extension of citizenship dependent upon the acceptance of an allotment of land in severalty. The latter arrangement was made with the Sioux, some of whom still reside within the State of Minnesota.

⁸⁷*United States Statutes at Large*, LXIII, 253.

The Individual Naturalization

Following the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, which did not include Indians in its provisions, several Congressional acts were passed making possible the naturalization of members of various tribes. An example of this kind of legislation is the Act of July 15, 1870, which pertained to Minnesota Indians. This Act provided that a Winnebago Indian in the State of Minnesota could apply to the Federal District Court for citizenship. Before such citizenship could be granted to the individual, the Indian concerned was required to show to the satisfaction of the court that he was sufficiently intelligent and prudent to control his own affairs and interests, that he had adopted the habits of civilized life, and that for the preceding five years he had supported himself and his family.⁸⁸ Though the exact number of Winnebagos who became citizens in accordance with the provisions of this Act is unknown, most of the Winnebagos still residing in the state were citizens prior to 1924.

Through Allotment

Undoubtedly the Act through which the majority of Minnesota Indians acquired citizenship before 1924 was the General Allotment Act or the Dawes Act of 1887. This law conferred citizenship upon two classes of Indians, namely:

An Indian to whom allotments were made in accordance with this Act, or any law or treaty and

An Indian born within the territorial limits of the United States who had voluntarily taken up residence separate and apart from any tribe of Indians therein and adopted the habits of civilized life.⁸⁹

By terms of the Burke Act adopted May 8, 1906, which amended the General Allotment Act, the Indian became a citizen after the patent in fee simple was granted instead of upon the completion of his allotment and the issuance of a trust patent.⁹⁰

⁸⁸Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 153-154.

⁸⁹*U. S. Statutes at Large*, XXIV, 390

⁹⁰Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 154

Through Intermarriage and Through Military Service

Although relatively few Indians became citizens of the United States through marriage to white men or through military service, it should be noted that by the Act of August 9, 1888, Indian women marrying citizens obtained citizenship⁹¹ and that under the provisions of the Act of November 6, 1919, any honorably discharged Indian who served in World War I could become a citizen.⁹² In 1940, still another group of Indians, residing within the State of Minnesota and previously excluded from citizenship, became eligible for citizenship through the provisions of the Nationality Act of that year. This Act provided that "The right to become a naturalized citizen under the provisions of this Act shall extend only to white persons, persons of African nativity or descent, and descendants of races indigenous to the Western Hemisphere."⁹³ Though the number of Minnesota Indians who fell within the scope of this Act was small, the Act did enable Indians born within the Dominion of Canada and residing in Minnesota to become citizens.

II. MINNESOTA CITIZENSHIP

The Indians residing in Minnesota are citizens of the state. As such they are entitled to vote in this state, provided of course that they have complied with the requirements of the state law including age and residence. They are eligible to seek public office. They not only are eligible to seek public employment, but are granted preferences in obtaining such employment in certain positions. The granting of preferences to Indians seeking public employment in work with Indians is not new; however, it was only recently that these preferences were extended to the better positions and to those paying the higher salaries. Early treaties and statutory provisions as early as 1834 gave Indians preference provided that they could perform the duties assigned them.⁹⁴ These positions included

⁹¹U. S. Statutes at Large, XXV, 392, Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 154.

⁹²U. S. Statutes at Large, XLI, 350, Cohen, *Op. Cit.*, 154.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 154. Footnote 27 quoted from Nationality Act of 1940 (Public No. 853, 76th Congress)

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 160.

clerical, farming, laboring, and mechanical ones; for the most part they paid low salaries or wages and involved little responsibility.

III. EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCES

With the passage of the Wheeler-Howard Act in 1934, Indians were assured preferences in appointment to the Federal Indian Service. Since 1939, qualified Indians of one quarter or more Indian blood can be appointed to any position in the Indian Service without examination.

IV. LIQUOR PROHIBITIONS

The Indian's position is legally different from that of other citizens and residents of the nation and state in that he is prohibited from purchasing and using any intoxicating liquors. The reason for these present-day prohibitions is to be found in early treaty provisions, the Indian's experience with liquor when it was introduced into the Indian country, and the feeling of legislative bodies that these restrictions still are beneficial to and necessary for the individual and the family. What effect this prohibition has upon the individual is unknown. Its effect upon employment opportunities is restrictive, for while it is legally possible for an Indian to be employed by any firm engaged in the manufacture, distribution, or sale of intoxicating liquors, few businesses either manufacturing or serving intoxicants will employ them. Many Indian persons feel this prohibition is unfair and denies to them a civil right. The Minnesota Legislature of 1947 removed the state prohibitions on the sale or use of liquor by Indians.

V. RIGHT TO WELFARE SERVICES

As citizens of the United States and of Minnesota, Indians residing in the state are eligible to receive general poor relief and the social security aids on the same basis as other residents of the state. The actual granting of assistance to Indians presents administrative problems which to some Indians appear to be discriminatory practices. For this reason, it seems

advisable to consider in some detail the present welfare program at it affects Minnesota Indians.

The problem of destitution among the Chippewa Indians of northern Minnesota has been a cause of concern for a considerable period of time. Though Indians as well as the general population have been aided during the past several years through federal, state, and county welfare programs, the conditions contributing to the high rate of dependency among the Indians cannot be ascribed wholly to the depression and the drought. The general condition of widespread unemployment and agricultural depression has tended to intensify the needs of the Indian population, but several factors must be considered in studying the present economic situation of the Indians.

In the first place, it should be noted that there is a close correlation between their economic and their legal status. In the second place, their cultural background and development must be contrasted with the growth and development of the country since the white population took possession of it.

Eligibility for Aid

Before further considering the problem of destitution and dependency among the Chippewas and before considering either the extent of this dependency or the financial commitments necessary to provide adequately for the population concerned, it seems advisable to inquire into the problem of placing financial responsibility for the programs involved in caring for needy Indians.

The laws of Minnesota providing for the care of dependent persons make need the basis of granting assistance and place the responsibility for actually administering these programs on the respective township and county welfare boards.

Race or residence on or near an Indian reservation is not a bar to eligibility. Therefore, Indians are as eligible as whites for the benefits of the various federal and state relief and welfare programs administered through the county welfare boards. The actual administration of the various programs for the

benefit of both Indians and whites, however, presents definite problems. A study of the programs involved clearly indicates that some programs are not adapted to meet the needs of the Indians; to others the Indian apparently could not adapt himself; and in still others it appeared that Indians are sometimes ineligible for benefits because the eligibility requirements do not take into consideration circumstances peculiar to the Indian. The absence of a definite understanding as to what benefits are available to the Indians through the Indian Office and the misunderstanding that exists when this information is not available to the counties have led to further confusion.

Consequently, it was found that all three levels of government, federal, state, and local are assuming some responsibility for Indian welfare.

Federal responsibility has existed in Minnesota since the conquest of the Indians and subsequent treaties. State responsibility was assumed when federal assistance proved inadequate and when the local communities were unwilling or financially unable to meet the problem. County and township responsibility was assumed when legal or court interpretation so required.

County Responsibility

Of the three levels of government, the county is probably the least able to assume the responsibility, for the Indian population is concentrated in those areas in Minnesota which are least able to support a general welfare program and in which the problem of tax levies and methods of financing relief costs has been most troublesome. The focusing of local attention on ways and means of raising adequate funds for welfare purposes has tended to accentuate the feeling that local communities are not and cannot be responsible for Indians. The fact that the Indians, either because of their inability to pay taxes or because of their legal status excluding them from certain forms of local taxation, do not contribute through taxation to the communities concerned, has contributed towards this feeling. While this is true it should be remembered that real

estate taxes constitute only one part of the taxes collected in Minnesota and that Indians like other citizens pay amusement, gasoline, and withholding taxes.

State Activity

The state's activity in assuming responsibility for Indian welfare has been based upon the general philosophy and policy of assisting all needy counties to meet their general relief programs. Though the state has made no specific allocation for Indian relief, the fact that eighty-one per cent of the entire cost of general relief to Indians was borne by the state in 1939-1940 clearly indicates the degree to which the state has assisted counties with a concentrated Indian population. In the Old Age Assistance programs, the state has, through statutory provision since 1935, provided for reimbursement to counties for the counties' share of Old Age Assistance grants made to Indians. Similarly, since 1941, the state has provided for reimbursement to counties having a concentrated Indian population for the counties' share of Aid to Dependent Children grants. Though the amount appropriated to cover the counties' share for both OAA and ADC grants has not always been adequate, the state's recognition of its responsibility to its Indian citizens cannot be questioned. During the depression years, the state further provided funds to many local political subdivisions for sponsoring WPA projects in Indian areas. Then, too, many Indians received WPA employment through state-sponsored projects.

Federal Agencies

The federal government's responsibility in providing for Indians is obvious. The fact that many Indians are wards of the federal government, and that it therefore acts as guardian for them, is accepted. This guardianship, of course, involves the conservation of Indian property, protection of their persons, and care for their health, education, and general welfare.

The federal government has granted considerable material assistance to Indians through the three Indian Agencies located in Minnesota; giving rations, medical relief, clothing to school

children and grocery orders to families. At other times, the federal government has granted Indians assistance through administrative regulations such as that released in 1933 by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. In a letter released in 1933 to all states by FERA, all state administrators were authorized to provide relief from federal funds to ward as well as non-ward Indians. Another example of this type of assistance to Indians by the federal government is found in its rulings during CWA, WPA, NYA, and PWA⁹⁵ to the effect that "no person shall be discriminated against because of race or creed." Other federal programs included the Farm Security Administration, Surplus Commodities, and Civilian Conservation Corps.

Besides providing aid to Indians under such general federal programs, the federal government has made available considerable assistance by general work programs under the jurisdiction of the Indian office. The CCCID is probably the largest program of this specialized kind which operated in Minnesota.

In concluding this discussion of responsibility, it should be noted that the confusion in placing responsibility and the continual shifting of authority and responsibility have made each group reluctant to assume more than its share of responsibility. Indeed this shifting of responsibility has led to a negative policy or to one presupposing that if one agency won't assist the Indians, another will.

Another area in the social welfare program in which the problem of the responsibility of the federal and state government is confusing is the commitment and institutionalization of insane, feeble-minded and epileptic persons and of dependent or neglected children. This problem arises because of the status of some Indians as wards and because of their residence on Indian reservations under the jurisdiction of the United States government. In such cases, the facilities of the State of Minnesota are not available to these Indians; instead provision must be made for such persons through the Indian Service. This is

⁹⁵The abbreviated names of the various welfare programs are used throughout this paper. The programs referred to include Civil Works Administration, Works Progress Administration, National Youth Administration, and Public Works Administration. The Indian Division of the Civilian Conservation Corps is referred to as CCCID.

not only time consuming but extremely complicated, and makes for inadequacies in the total welfare program and for inconsistent handling of persons needing institutional care and child welfare services. The fact that the state and county have no jurisdiction in these areas, however, precludes the possibility of their providing services, normally available to Minnesota citizens, to these needy Indians and Indian children.

Chapter VIII

INDIAN CULTURE VS. WHITE CIVILIZATION

In the one hundred and forty years that have passed since the Louisiana Purchase, the coming of the white trader, pioneer, and settler has brought many changes to the Indian lands and people of Minnesota. The passing of the buffalo, the exhausting of the forests, and the closing of the frontier all bespeak the changes wrought by the coming of the white man and by a different utilization of the resources in the area. With each advance of the settler and his concomitant culture, the process of "civilizing the Chippewa" became more confusing and confused. The introduction to the Indian of a new way of life differing in every major respect from that of his accepted and hereditary one inevitably made for some confusion as to cultural values.

The recorded history of the white man's coming to Minnesota and his development of its resources is a chronicle of his continued encroachment upon Indian lands, upon the Indian's way of life, and upon the very means by which the Indian existed. This phase of history has ended, and today the Indian finds himself segregated in Indian communities or on reservations where the opportunities for economic security are most limited and where an unfriendly and unsatisfactory environment offers little if any satisfaction to the individual, the family, or the group. There are, in the Indian communities in Minnesota today, many evidences of the Indian's adaptation of the white man's culture, but the "road to civilization" has

not been an easy one. It has produced confusion, conflict, and some assimilation, but with the last have come individual disorganization and social disorganization.

The Indian's life in Minnesota today is not an easy one; it is characterized by economic insecurity, by indecision, and by passivity. In order to understand his position today, it seems advisable to consider briefly some of the areas in which the culture conflict has been most pronounced. At the time of the white man's entry into Minnesota, both the Chippewa and Sioux were free and independent peoples following a way of life which they had developed over many generations. With the coming of settlement, the Indian was no longer either free or independent but rather restricted and conquered. These restrictions ultimately made him part of an almost helpless minority, deprived him of his economic security, and introduced him to an economy of dependency. The prosperity which the Indian may have enjoyed in the early days of the fur traders and at the time of the sale of allotments was short lived if it was ever real. Money, which had been unknown in the Chippewa culture, meant little and was soon spent.

Monetary Concepts

With the further depletion of Indian resources, whether in furs, land, or timber, the funds derived from these sources were sharply curtailed or no longer available. At the same time, the Indian had not yet accepted the white man's concept of employment for wages or his evaluation of money.⁹⁶ The continued availability of funds quite meager when compared with those secured from sale of resources, from the payment of annuities, and from per capita payments tended to perpetuate this dependency at a lower level. An annuity is the periodic payment of either money or goods based upon treaty obligations. Per capita payments are payments to enrolled individuals of specific sums of money from the tribal funds on deposit in the United States Treasury. Among the Chippewa Indians, these tribal funds had been generally accumulated through the sale of land or timber rights. These payments were made only

⁹⁶MacGregor, Gordon, *Warriors Without Weapons*, 29, 40-51 *passim*.

after Congress had authorized a specific payment. With the abrogation of treaty obligations to the Sioux following the massacre of 1862 and the termination of the provisions for annuities in the Chippewa treaties, the amounts available to the Indians in Minnesota were greatly curtailed. With the gradual depletion of tribal funds of the Consolidated Chippewa group, the possibility of receiving even these payments became very remote until today it is doubtful that any further payments will be made.

The problem of destitution among the Minnesota Chippewas is not new; it has long been a source of concern to various state and federal agencies. The decade of the 1930's with its widespread unemployment and agricultural depression intensified the needs of the state's Indian population and accentuated their economic insecurity. As a result of the various emergency work relief programs such as WPA, NYA, CCC, and CCCID, the concept of employment for wages became more accepted, but the pattern of poverty and economic insecurity continued.⁹⁷

Mine and Thine

Two other customs, common to many Indian tribes, which were in conflict with the prevailing practice of the white man's culture and which have been influential in the process of acculturation were the Indian's concept of property and the practice of "give away." Property was not individualized. Property, whether in the form of land, homes, or produce, was not bought or sold. Land was plentiful, homes were easily built or replaced, and food was gathered in abundance. The few more personal belongings of an individual were not reserved or held within a family group, but might at the time of death be buried with the deceased or given away. Throughout the life span of an individual, merit did not accrue to the individual through the acquisition or accumulation of goods; rather, merit was determined through the distribution of wealth.⁹⁸ Though the ceremonials and occasions for distributing goods varied from tribe to tribe, these practices which were part of

⁹⁷Division of Social Welfare, Report on Indian Welfare, *Op. Cit.*, 10-23. *passim*.

⁹⁸Mead, Margaret, *The Changing Culture of an Indian Tribe*, 39-45.

both the Chippewa and Sioux cultures are mentioned, for they do help explain the apparent lack of desire to save earnings or income.

To what extent any one of these hereditary customs of the Indians contributes to the present economic dependency of the population is not known. However, it can be said that when the economic processes of white civilization were superimposed upon the Indian, his traditional concept of cooperative enterprise, his unfamiliarity with a concept of working for wages or individual gain or of receiving money without effort through the disposal of resources, his concept of property and its uses and values, and his practice of "give away" made his acceptance of and adjustment to the prevailing economic system difficult if not immediately impossible.

The Family

Traditionally the role of the family in both Chippewa and Sioux societies was quite different from that of the family among these groups today. The fundamental unit in either society was the biological family. However, families generally lived in bands or groups; the families residing in a band or group were generally related. A single group usually lived alone during the winter, but in the spring joined other groups for the annual religious ceremonials, for hunting, or for other cooperative activities. The biological family retained its identity insofar as living, child rearing, and education were concerned, but lost this identity in the group which represented a communal way of life in food gathering, hunting, and social activities. There was a good deal of group responsibility which made for sharing of resources. The family relationships in both societies were close.⁹⁹

Marriage

Both the Chippewa and the Sioux had an acceptable social form of marriage in their culture pattern. Though both groups practiced polygamy, basic standards of chastity were main-

⁹⁹Hilger, *Op. Cit.*, 20-21; McGregor, *Op. Cit.*, 52.

tained for the girls. Among the Sioux, a severe system of chaperonage was maintained and family sanction was secured before a marriage took place. Gifts were presented by the man to the girl's parents, but the ceremony itself, except in marriages of social importance, did not involve a religious sanction or service.¹⁰⁰ Among the Chippewa, parents exercised considerable influence in the selection of mates. Again a strict system of chaperonage was maintained. There was no specific marriage ceremony, and what is often referred to as an Indian custom marriage probably meant "nothing more than eating together and sharing the fur robes used as bedding."¹⁰¹ Though separations were permitted with either the husband or the wife returning to the home of his or her parents, infidelity on the part of the wife was not countenanced. The penalties for infidelity in both the Chippewa and the Sioux cultures were severe.¹⁰²

Role of Parents

In both the Chippewa and Sioux cultures, the role of the father and mother in relationship to their children was well-defined. The basic relationship was always one of real affection. The relationship of the father to his sons was particularly close, for the father was responsible for the training of the boys. This training prepared the boy for his economic and social role in society and included fighting, fishing, and hunting. Similarly, the relationship of the mother to daughters was close, her training being devoted particularly to the tasks generally assigned women. Abandonment, desertion, or neglect of children was rare; when it did occur, relatives assumed responsibility for the care of children.¹⁰³

Today, the pattern of individual, family and social disorganization is clearly discernible in the Indian group. The social controls of the earlier culture are no longer effective, and no other set of standards has been accepted to replace them. The traditional occupations of the group can no longer provide economic security. Other occupational opportunities

¹⁰⁰McGregor, *Op. Cit.*, 62-63.

¹⁰¹Hilger, *Op. Cit.*, 84.

¹⁰²McGregor, *Op. Cit.*, 119; Hilger, *Op. Cit.*, 82.

¹⁰³McGregor, *Op. Cit.*, 57-58; Hilger, *Op. Cit.*, 100-103.

+ How about French-Canadian
mixture as affecting
these standards?

on or near the reservations are most limited. Except for some full-time employment provided through governmental agencies, full-time regular employment is not available. Seasonal and part-time employment when available does not and cannot assure economic security.

Working Mothers

The family of today reflects this basic economic insecurity. The traditional role of the husband and father, as head of the household and its chief support, is jeopardized. His role in relationship to his children has been displaced, for not only have the hereditary occupations disappeared but new ones which might give him status have not replaced them. Furthermore, the father's role in the informal education of his sons is now being performed by the formal educational system of the white man's culture. The role of the mother has likewise changed. More and more she has assumed responsibility for the partial support of the family as well as for the maintenance of the home and care of the children. The employment of young women on NYA and of older women on WPA projects during the 1930's and early 1940's contributed to this changing role. More recently the employment of women in defense work and in other employment away from the reservations has made for greater independence on the part of women and for further disintegration of the family.

The traditional family controls of the children are no longer effective. Again new standards have not replaced them. The increasing number of broken homes, the increasing number of illegitimate births, and the increasing number of juvenile delinquents all reflect this family disorganization. The passivity with which the Indian has accepted this situation may be ascribed to a fear of the white man's authority, to the presence of an unsatisfactory environment still characterized by cultural, economic, and social deprivations, and to suspicion of the dominant group which, though meaning well, has not been too understanding of the Indian's position.

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X
X² Sup. Bur.
reorganization
"sup. changes"
marriages
X where they are?
if, there are certain evidences
of "new standards" though
not desirable

Chapter IX

THE INDIAN AND HIS DWELLING

As with any group of people residing in Minnesota, the housing of the Indian population varies greatly. Some live in well-equipped, modern homes; others reside in poorly furnished, poorly constructed homes; and others exist under most deplorable conditions. Since the number living under good housing conditions is extremely limited, no attempt will be made to consider them. These homes are generally found in the Twin City area or in towns or cities where an Indian office is located. Here, the occupants are well established economically and enjoy security.

The City Dwellers

Because the majority of the state's Indian population resides in the so-called Indian country either on or adjacent to the reservations, its housing will be considered at greater length on the following pages. One further group, however, should be mentioned — the Indian persons who have moved into the Twin City area within the past four years to take advantage of employment opportunities in Minneapolis and St. Paul. While no detailed survey of their housing conditions was made for purposes of this report, a sampling was made. This indicated that the recent Indian migrants to the cities were crowded into homes in blighted areas. In at least one instance the multiple structure into which families have moved have been condemned.

The Indian population which moved into Minneapolis and St. Paul in the past four years is transient. A pattern of movement back to the reservation is already discernible. This probably reflects the loss of defense and war employment, the lack of other employment opportunities for the group in the cities, and the desire of the individuals concerned to return to their "homes" and to such security as exists on a reservation.

Towns and Villages

The approach to the various Indian reservations in Minnesota is typically the same. The towns and villages in which they live are of two kinds: the first are the organized villages or towns adjacent to or built upon a highway or railroad, and the second are located inland from the highways and are unincorporated villages. In the organized towns and villages, it would be difficult if not impossible to distinguish the Indian homes from those occupied by whites. However, in the unincorporated villages or in the shanty towns that too often border the towns in the Indian country, it is possible to distinguish the Indian home. The unincorporated villages, themselves largely inhabited by Indian persons, are characterized by poverty. The homes which make up these villages are for the most part unpainted, inartistic, small frame houses in need of repairs. From the exterior, they present a most unattractive appearance and reflect the poverty of their occupants. Certainly, as one enters these villages on any of the reservations in Minnesota today, one is struck by the drabness of the existence, the seeming acceptance of the situation, and a totally unfriendly living situation.

The Structure Itself

The homes themselves can be divided into three types: tar-paper shacks, small frame structures, and rehabilitation houses. The majority of these homes are one or two room structures. With the exception of the rehabilitation houses, they are poorly built, in need of repairs, and in a few instances not habitable. The typical home is a shack 12' x 16', 16' x 18', or 16' x 24'. Many of the structures are covered with tar paper. Some are ceiled with wallboard, cardboard, or newspaper on the interior. Practically none of the homes have cellars or foundations of any kind; all of the homes have flooring of some kind. Few of the homes have running water and even fewer have indoor toilets. While some families secure their water from nearby springs, the majority carry or haul their water from community wells.

The approach to most of these homes is similarly bleak and desolate. In the summer months, there are few lawns and flowers; the majority of the yards are grown over with weeds and littered with broken furniture, boxes, food, and other debris.

The interior of the homes reflects the overcrowded conditions that generally exist. The one-room and two-room shacks or frame houses are congested; little, if any, privacy exists for any member of the household. Inadequate heating facilities in the larger homes often force the family to utilize the living room as kitchen, dining room, and bedroom.¹⁰⁴

The Furnishings

The majority of families possess the barest of household necessities. Furniture is usually poor. Tables, homemade or factory made, seldom are large enough to accommodate the whole family at meal time. Chairs include some old upholstered pieces, backless chairs, and such substitutes as old apple boxes, crates, or barrels. Bedroom furniture is similarly poor; mattresses and bedding are likewise of mediocre quality and often substitutes. Dishes generally consist of heavy earthenware, enamelled dishes, and pie tins, while cooking utensils include some pots and pans with substitutes of emptied quart or gallon pails for pans when necessary. Lighting in most of these homes is provided by kerosene lamps, though a few families do use gasoline lamps and fewer use electricity. Refrigeration is very rare in these homes. A small storage space for potatoes or other garden produce is generally available. Since the level of subsistence of most of these families is very low, there is little need for storage space other than that available in their small cellars.¹⁰⁵

In spite of the poverty of these homes and the lack of household equipment to make the homes more livable, many of the homes maintain excellent housekeeping standards. Others have been described as "repulsive in their filthiness, being littered with dirty bits of both raw and cooked foods. . . ." ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Hilger, *Op. Cit.*, 41-73. *passim*.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 130-189, *passim*.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 131.

The housekeeping standards vary considerably; and while some of the poor standards might be explained in terms of lack of facilities, it should be noted that the standards in some of the tar paper shacks are high and that those in some of the rehabilitation houses are poor. Another fact which should be noted is that during the past four years some families enjoying higher incomes through defense work did secure through their own efforts better equipment and that some standards were raised.

On the whole, however, the housing condition of the typical Indian family living in Indian communities near or on reservations is inadequate. Their household equipment is similarly inadequate if normal family life is considered as a criterion for these people.

Chapter X

THE INDIAN AND HIS LIVELIHOOD

One of the reasons for the unsatisfactory environmental and housing situation is the dependency and poverty of the group. The dependency can be explained in terms of many factors, including the seeming purposelessness of life on the reservation, the apathy of a people long considered "wards," the changing and confusing existence of a group whose life has been planned for them, and the social disorganization that accompanies the partial change from a relatively simple culture to a complex one. Another factor basic to the present pattern of dependency and to the insecurity which characterizes all aspects of life on the reservations is the lack of employment opportunities for the employable members of the population.

I. THE POVERTY OF THE RESERVATIONS

The very location of the reservations with their varying resources which has been discussed earlier in this report eliminates the possibility of the population's being employed there in any kind of business, industrial, or manufacturing situation. Where resources such as fish, good agricultural land, and timber still exist, the work is seasonal and insufficient to meet the needs of any but a small portion of the popula-

tion. Though the resources of the Red Lake reservation are greater than those of any of the other reservations, even there work is insufficient to provide employment to those of its residents who are able and willing to work. Because of the depletion of the forests, the amount of woods work in future years will be decreased.

The high percentage of dependency of the Indian population of Minnesota through the decade 1932 to 1942 has been noted. During the years 1938 to 1941, assistance programs provided whole or partial subsistence to over eighty per cent of the Indian population.¹⁰⁷ In other years the percentage of dependency was higher; in others slightly lower. While comparable figures on dependency of other racial groups are not available for any year during the depression, it can be noted that in St. Paul, where a study of relief rolls was made in 1936, some 23 per cent of the white population and 62 per cent of the Negro population were dependent.¹⁰⁸

II. IN THE WAR YEARS

The war years brought an abrupt end to the need for work relief programs on the reservations as elsewhere, but full employment was still not available on the reservations. The majority of the employable men and women, numbering some 1,800 persons, who did not serve in the military forces left the reservation to work in defense centers. Many secured work in the Twin City area; others in the munitions plant at Hastings, Nebraska, and in the aircraft factories on the west coast. Dependency allotments provided a substitute for relief to many families who remained on the reservation. Except for the social security aids, assistance costs on the reservations were negligible during the period 1942 to 1946. Though the decrease in relief costs was most welcome, the source of the livelihood of the group deserves further consideration. Public funds in the form of the wages paid in defense work, of allotments paid to dependents of men and women in the armed forces, and of social security aids still provided the means of livelihood for

¹⁰⁷Minnesota State Relief Agency: Report on Indian Relief, 1938, 18; Minnesota Division of Social Welfare Report, *Op. Cit.*, 24.

¹⁰⁸Governor's Interracial Commission of Minnesota, *The Negro Worker in Minnesota*, 15-16.

Minnesota's Indian population. The contribution of the Indian people of the state to the war effort was a considerable one. Over 1,074 men and women served in the military forces;¹⁰⁹ many were injured and some were killed. Approximately 1,800 were employed directly in defense work;¹¹⁰ their employment records were good. The fact that public funds, though channeled through defense and military programs, provided the means of existence for the group does not detract in any way from the contribution of the population. It does, however, point up the fact that the basic problem of meeting the needs of the group was not met on the reservations.

With the conclusion of fighting in the European and Pacific theaters of the war, with the termination of defense work, and with the demobilization of the men and women in the military forces, more and more Indian persons have returned to the reservation. With their termination or discharge, money payments in the form of wages and dependency allotments ceased. Relief has not yet been called upon to provide the necessary subsistence for the group. When it will is unknown. Seasonal work was still available at the time of this study, and some families still had savings accumulated during the past year. The fish market, which was a lucrative one during the war years partly because of meat rationing, provided some income for the population. Wild rice, which was most plentiful this year and which sold at a high price, also contributed substantially to the population's 1946 income. Woods work has continued at a high level the past few months. Government work, largely suspended during the war years, has been accelerated this year through blister rust control projects on the reservations. Payments of \$20 per week to discharged unemployed veterans on the reservations are numerous; unemployment compensation benefits to discharged unemployed workers are likewise numerous. But fishing, "ricing," and timber work are seasonal; payments under the G.I. Bill of Rights to unemployed veterans terminate; and unemployment compensation payments end.

¹⁰⁹Statement of Superintendents of the Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency and of the Red Lake Indian Agency.

¹¹⁰Statement of Superintendents of the Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency and of the Red Lake Indian Agency.

III. PRIVATE EMPLOYERS

In an effort to determine what employment opportunities existed for Indians in Minnesota in 1946 and what opportunities in private business would continue to be available to Indians in 1947, a questionnaire was prepared and mailed to 110 private employers in Minnesota. These employers were selected after consultation with representatives of Indian offices in Minnesota, with Indian persons, with members of county welfare board staffs, and with representatives of state employment offices in the "Indian country." The employers contacted through the questionnaire were considered representative of Minnesota business, large and small, urban and rural. The firms contacted in the rural districts were all located in towns or cities near Indian reservations. All were known to offer employment for which Indians could qualify by training or experience.

In Small Towns

Of the 110 employers contacted, 93 completed and returned the questionnaire or made some reply to the request for information. Fifty-six of these firms were located in towns or cities such as Bagley, Bemidji, Cass Lake, Cloquet, Detroit Lakes, Grand Marais, Grand Rapids, Mahanomen, Mille Lacs, Onamia, Pine City, Red Wing, Tower, Pipestone, Virginia, and Walker. Thirty-seven of the replies were made by firms located in Duluth, Minneapolis, and St. Paul.

Two general conclusions can be drawn from the information available on the completed questionnaires. The first is that there is little full-time regular employment in private business available to Indians in the cities or towns adjacent to the reservations. The second is that the closer the business or firm is to a reservation, the less opportunity there is for an Indian to be employed there.

The fifty-six firms concerned hired but 86 Indians in October of 1946, at the time of the request for information. Thirty of these were processing wild rice, an occupation which would be classified as seasonal work. The others were employed

in manufacturing, maintenance, service, skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled, and supervisory work. All of the persons employed were considered competent workers.

A further study of the replies submitted on the questionnaire is interesting; for of the 56 firms reporting, eleven were currently employing Indians, sixteen had never done so, and twenty-nine had previously used Indian employees. The individual and his total social adjustment is of apparent importance in a person's present or continued employment. "Good Indians" are differentiated from "bad Indians"; the former generally meet the standards of the white man's culture. "Bad Indians" on the other hand—described as lazy, shiftless, irresponsible, lacking ambition, and indifferent—are reported to present problems of absenteeism, drinking, tardiness, and uncleanliness. Many of the "good Indians" have been employed over a considerable period of time; they are considered competent, reliable, and satisfactory workers.

The eleven firms who have never employed Indians included manufacturing and packing companies, retail stores and restaurants. The replies indicated that they had never received an application from an Indian, that they had handled beer, or that they simply had never hired an Indian and did not think they would.

The replies of the twenty-nine firms who had previously employed Indians but who are not now using such labor reflect once more the firms' experiences with individuals. Some of these experiences have been positive, and the Indian is reported to be capable and intelligent as well as to have specific skills requiring manual dexterity. Other experiences have not been positive; and though the worker's capacity is never questioned, his ability to handle himself is. Only three firms stated that they would again employ Indians without setting up specific qualifications. Eleven would do so if no white labor is available, if the Indian would work as regularly as the white worker, or if the Indian "really wanted to work." Eight others would employ an Indian only on an individual basis and if the Indian were known to be reliable. Seven firms would not again employ an Indian. These firms had found Indians unsat-

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W. J. 11-17-11
isfactory in "any or all work" and reported high absenteeism, drinking, and irresponsibility, while one reported that the attitude of the Indians was that if they did not work the Government would support them. The thinking of the representatives of the firms which replied is probably based upon unfortunate experiences that they or some other firm have had with Indian workers.

The reports of the firms located in the rural districts are incomplete; not every business employing persons was contacted. These reports therefore present but a partial picture of employment opportunities for Indians in northern Minnesota. The pattern of non-employment except on an individual basis is not conclusive. It is, however, of vital importance when one remembers the history of dependency among the population, the sparsity of regular employment opportunities on the reservations, the lack of sufficient resources on the reservations to support their populations, the youthfulness of the population, and the lack of security which characterizes the population and which is reflected in the number of social problems on the reservations.

In Urban Areas

The reports on the completed questionnaires returned by thirty-seven firms in the three urban centers in the state indicate that Indians residing in the cities are employed in a variety of capacities. Over half of the businesses reporting employed Indians; others did not maintain race classifications in the personnel files, and others had never hired Indians. Indian persons are currently employed in manufacturing, in sales work, in the trades, and in supervisory positions. They are also employed by the railroads in various capacities including the Train and Engine Service, the Yard Service, and the Fuel Service; by airlines in mechanical capacities; by the public utility companies in clerical, construction, and maintenance capacities; by department stores in sales work, and by garment manufacturers and laundries as laborers. In commenting upon their experiences with Indian employees, the only firms which had had any "unsatisfactory experiences"

were those employing unskilled laborers. Here the comments indicated that apparently needless absenteeism and tardiness presented difficulties and that individuals' personal uncleanness created some problems in the relationship with white employees.

Like the questionnaires sent to firms in the rural districts, those sent to businesses in the urban areas represent a sampling. The findings, therefore, cannot be considered conclusive; they do, however, indicate that a greater variety of employment opportunities exists and that these opportunities utilize the training and skill of the individual. The fact that Indians residing in the cities have left the reservation and are further removed from Indian culture, combined with the fact that the employing concern does not know the individual worker nor his living conditions, is noted. These facts may have significance in the social adjustment of the individual seeking work and in the willingness of the employer not only to accept applications for work but to employ the individual.

IV. PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

While the survey of the present employment status of and employment opportunities for Indians was largely concerned with private business, some mention should be made of opportunities existing for employment in the public service. The federal government through civil service would employ any qualified person in its various offices administered in the state. A large number of Indians, most of whom are either Chippewa or Sioux, are employed in the various Indian offices in the state.

The State Civil Service Law specifically prohibits any discrimination on the basis of race, color, or creed. The basis for employment is qualification and examination for the work. Information regarding race, color, and creed is therefore not available. It is, however, known that certain departments of the state do employ Indians; these include the Department of Highways, the Division of Social Welfare, and the Department of Conservation. The capacities in which individuals are

employed include highway patrol officers, nurses' aides, and common laborers.

Employment at the county level would be available to Indian persons, but the opportunities here are limited. In those county-administered programs such as social welfare, appointment would again be based upon examination; no discrimination because of color, race, or religion exists. The small number of persons employed is a result not of discriminatory practices but rather of the fact that most of the Indian population in the state lack the necessary educational qualifications. This lack of educational qualification is closely related to the existing educational program for Indians in the state and will be discussed later. It is sufficient to note here that the Indian's lack of the educational requirements excludes him from most state or county employment.

V. THE FUTURE

On the basis of the history of the Indian people during the last four generations, the high percentage of dependency during the depression years, the inadequacy of the economic resources of the reservations, the sparsity of full-time regular employment in towns or cities near or on the reservations, the number of Indians who were successfully employed away from the reservations during the war years, and the employment situation of those Indians residing in the cities, a few concluding statements can be made. The culture conflict which underlies all life on the reservation and which is discernible when the Indian is employed in the white man's culture, and also the lack of experience in working for wages and in saving for the proverbial rainy day, not only affect but to a large measure control the group's attitude towards employment. The stark evidences of poverty and the unfriendly and unsatisfying environment in which the day to day life of the people is lived, combined with the lack of regular employment opportunities near their homes, cannot help but exert influence in making life seem purposeless. All contribute to the apparent apathy and seeming acceptance of this way of life by the Indian people. The movement of individuals away from the reserva-

tions presents many problems. One of these is the individual's loss of privileges which may accrue to him by maintaining tribal relationships. So long as major claims against the federal government remain unsettled, the expectancy and hope that an individual may derive considerable financial benefit from this relationship will act as a deterrent to many persons leaving the security of the reservation.

A second problem is the competition the Indians inevitably must meet in a normal labor market dominated by white persons who are often vocationally better equipped and trained. The problems presented are not pleasant, but neither are they insurmountable. It is known that many Indians have demonstrated both the ability and capacity to work successfully in positions requiring responsibility, skill, and training. The experience of many Indians during the war years, when they left the reservations to compete successfully in industry, is another positive that should be considered in any planning for this minority.

Chapter XI

WHAT THE WHITE MAN HAS CONTRIBUTED

In the past, the members of the white race have been guilty of many injustices towards the Indian. Yet it is also true that both in the past many members of the white group have rendered many services to the Indian, and in the present through governmental agencies and through private organizations they are doing much. Formal mention should be made of some of those activities.

THE SERVICE OF RELIGION

Much attention has been given to the historical, legal and economic factors which have influenced the Indian. Yet this report would be substantially unbalanced if specific reference were not made to the part which religion has contributed in many of the efforts to improve the status of the Indian.

From the moment of the first meeting of the Indian and the white man, missionaries recognized the Indians as men like unto themselves and provided them with the same spiritual ministrations and the same teaching about the doctrines of Christianity that they gave to the members of the white group. Furthermore, it was the religious leaders who never ceased trying to restrain the avarice and the brutality of white traders and white settlers and never tired reminding the white group that Indians possessed the same natural rights as the white man. Those white men who spoke and acted in defense of the Indian did so largely because of the convictions which they had acquired from their profession of Christianity.

The Episcopalian and Catholic Churches were particularly interested in schools for Indians in Minnesota. The work of the Catholic Church dates back to the days of exploration by the Jesuits. During the nineteenth century, the activities of the "black robes" were continued by men of the type of Father Francis Pierz who conducted, for the migratory Chippewa, centers for training in the arts of agriculture, and Father Augustin Ravoux who compiled books in the Sioux language for his Indian schools. The work of the Protestant, and particularly that of the Episcopalian Church, has been extensive since the early days of settlement of the state. Bishop Henry B. Whipple of the Episcopal Church is remembered today in every community in the state for educational work as well as his defense of the Indian as an individual during the period of reprisal that followed the Indian wars. Today, as in the nineteenth century, the work of the Catholic, Episcopalian, and other churches is both educational and religious. It is carried on persistently and quietly without any attempt to exploit the Indian for ideologies.

EDUCATION

Traditionally the educational programs seeking to bring the advantages of the white man's civilization to the Indian were provided through federal funds appropriated for education, through tribal funds and through private organizations usually affiliated with a religious group. The major portion of all

funds spent for Indian education until the last decade of the nineteenth century was derived from private or tribal sources.

Public Schools

In 1890, the Indian Service began to use public schools for the instruction of Indian children of more than one-fourth Indian blood. At that time, the federal government, through the Indian Service, instituted a policy of reimbursing public schools for the actual increase in cost caused by the instruction of Indian children. Under the operation of the Johnson O'Malley Act of April 16, 1934, which has been mentioned earlier in this report, the general educational program for Indians in Minnesota is provided through federal-state cooperation. Under a contract entered into each year by the State Department of Education with the Indian Service, the State of Minnesota in return for a sum of money determined each year provides educational facilities for Indian children. Though the federal government today still assumes the principal responsibility for the education of Indian children in Minnesota, public schools with Indians in attendance receive full state aids. Federal funds replace local taxes.

Besides these public school facilities made available through the federal government, the non-reservation boarding school at Pipestone is maintained through the Indian Service. While the admissions to this elementary school are limited to dependent children, many Minnesota children are cared for and educated there. The Indian School at Flandreau, South Dakota, which provides secondary education, is also available for Minnesota Indian children.

The mission schools, formerly operated on a boarding school basis, continue to provide elementary education on a day basis. During the current academic year, several hundred Indian children are regularly enrolled at the Mission Schools on the White Earth and Red Lake reservations. The federal government no longer makes any contribution to the maintenance or support of these schools; necessary funds are provided by the Catholic Church and when possible by the parents of the children enrolled there.

Higher Education

The facilities of the University of Minnesota and of the state-maintained junior and teachers colleges and of the various liberal arts colleges are, of course, available to any Indian student meeting the academic requirements for admission. Very few Minnesota Indian students are enrolled in either colleges or universities. According to estimates of the superintendents of the Chippewa Indian agencies in Minnesota, only four persons are now attending colleges or universities.¹¹¹

The reason that so few Indian youths attend either secondary schools or colleges probably is an economic and social one. There is no evidence to support a statement that the Indian could not compete successfully from an intellectual standpoint. While American Indians have been found to test below white norms on certain psychological tests, in others they have tested equal to whites. The poorer performances of the Indian on some tests has been explained in terms of cultural handicaps and the conclusion drawn that "test results would compare favorably with those of whites, age for age, if the Indians had had the same environmental advantages as the whites."¹¹²

Since over half of the Indian youth leave school upon completion of the eighth grade, no consideration of the secondary school curricula will be made. However, a real need exists for further vocational counselling and training to meet the requirements of the group and to help them prepare for living. The lack of leisure-time and extracurricular-activity programs is noteworthy too, since the environmental disadvantages of the home and the communities are so marked.

BETTER HEALTH

The cooperative efforts of the Minnesota State Department of Health with the federal government have already been discussed. The success of these efforts has been marked. The

¹¹¹Statement of Superintendents of Consolidated Chippewa Indian Agency and of Red Lake Indian Agency.

¹¹²Cowen, P. A., "Testing Indian School Pupils in the State of New York," *Mental Hygiene*, 27, 82 (January 1943).

health of the individual Indian is good. The percentage of maternal and infant deaths, of tuberculosis, of trachoma, and of venereal disease has declined. Not only is this achievement of real benefit to the population itself, but it is most creditable when one remembers the poor housing, over-crowded conditions, and lack of household equipment among many of the population.

WELFARE SERVICES

The fourth program and the one that daily affects the lives of most of the state's Indian population is the Social Welfare program. The work of the Minnesota Division of Social Welfare in cooperation with the federal government in the administration of the Indian wing of the State Sanatorium has already been mentioned. The state's assumption of financial responsibility for the county share of costs for old age assistance and aid to dependent children has been noted. Indian persons, both adults and children, are also eligible for most of the welfare services provided other residents of the state. The differences in child welfare services available to Indian and white children in the state is apparent from even a cursory survey of these services. While those provided on the reservations are of necessity limited by the shortage of staffs in some counties, the lack of an adequate boarding home program in Indian communities is apparent. Over thirty per cent of the Indian children known to the County Welfare Boards were receiving institutional care while approximately five per cent of the white children receiving care were institutionalized. Though it is recognized that institutional care is necessary and recommended in some dependency situations, it is doubtful that thirty per cent of the Indian children need this service. The present trend in child welfare programs is to utilize the foster home more and the institution less. The fact that institutions are used so widely in caring for Indian children probably reflects the absence of a foster home program for Indian children and the lack of individualized planning in many instances. How well the Indian boarding school can prepare a child for life in a community cannot be determined here. It is doubtful however that the Indian boarding school is better

equipped to prepare a child for adult life in a community than is any other institution. One might therefore question the extensive use made of this facility and wonder about the effects in many cases of the prolonged stay of the child in such an environment.

The fact that case work and child welfare services needed most by the Indian population are not always available to them is a result of confused and confusing programs which have developed to alleviate the needs of the group but which have been restricted because of the legal status of the land. How far any county welfare board or the Division of Social Welfare could go in providing these services is questionable. At the present time, professionally trained personnel is difficult to secure. When workers are available, they find they must carry on their work with Indians in a situation confused by the legal status of the land, federal regulations, conflicting authorities, inadequate funds, and a general lack of facilities on the reservations. If the worker finds such a situation discouraging and, some would say, hopeless, certainly the Indian must find his position confusing, discouraging, and seemingly purposeless.

Chapter XII

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS

Throughout the preceding chapters a constant effort has been made to present thoroughly reliable factual statements about the historical and social forces which have influenced the lives of the Indian. The aim has been to make this report dominantly a factual statement, although occasionally attention was directed to some inevitable conclusions. In this section, however, formally the Commission does wish to make several observations. It is its belief that the material presented warrants these inferences.

1. *Regarding the Indian*

The Indian definitely is an asset to the State of Minnesota. The Indian population is proportionally more youthful than the general population, and it is increasing. It is healthy and it possesses capacities and skills which can be used. In the recent World War, the Indians have assumed the same responsibility as other citizens in the military branches of the nation and also in the war industries where their skills were highly esteemed. The modern Indian is an asset and Minnesota needs him.

At times the Indians have been accused of being lazy, indifferent, and difficult. Some of those alleged qualities are due to the historical and social factors already discussed. For those factors the white group must assume a large share of responsibility. Yet there is danger for the Indian in brooding over the injustices of the past. The future lies with the individual members of the race. Some members of the Indian group have achieved considerable leadership in white communities. The honest recognition of existing opportunities might be more helpful than constant reflection upon existing injustices. History clearly teaches that the national and racial groups that have achieved eminent success have been those which have tried to inculcate in each individual strong convictions about the value of personal industry.

II. *Regarding Reservations*

A pattern of segregation of the Indian population exists in the state. While the reasons for this segregation on reservations and in communities can be explained in terms of Minnesota's history as a territory and as a state, continuing this segregation today is detrimental to the population. Not only do the reservations provide a false sense of security which will probably continue so long as any claims against the federal government remain outstanding, but they tend to perpetuate a way of living that has proved neither constructive nor satisfying to the Indian.

The reservations and Indian communities in the state have insufficient resources to provide the population with economic security. This fact has contributed to the high percentage of dependency among the population; a dependency which has in turn contributed to the development of other social problems.

The Commission is of the opinion that specific and constructive measures should be taken to abolish the reservations.

III. *Regarding Jobs*

The lack of regular full-time employment, not financed and supported by governmental agencies on or near the reservations, has again contributed to the dependency of the group. It has moreover been a real factor in the total pattern of cultural conflict, defeat, economic insecurity, and an unfriendly environment in making the Indian of today appear immature, apathetic, and resigned.

In view of the youth of the state's Indian population definite programs should be developed so that the interests and skills of the population can be utilized in the economic life of Minnesota today. The possibility of developing more employment on the reservations, as long as they exist, should be considered and facilities established to assist vocationally trained youth to secure work off the reservations.

The Commission is of the opinion that the State of Minnesota, through the proper agencies, might try to encourage those private industries that could use the Indian's skills to establish branches near the localities where Indians reside.

IV. Regarding Vocational Counselling

Since the employment opportunities on and near Indian communities or reservations are limited, a broader educational program offering both vocational counselling and training could be helpful. Through it, the aptitudes and skills of the group would be recognized and training provided that would meet the needs of the individual. Such a program would make possible the further employment of Indian youth away from the reservation in urban centers.

The Minnesota Department of Education might give serious consideration to the possibility of providing through their department vocational counsellors.

V. Regarding Social Services

In view of the history of dependency amongst the Indian population, the need of skilled child welfare services, and the confusing pattern of existing laws, it is recommended that consideration be given to the possibility of providing all social services on the same basis that health services and education are now provided. This could be done by virtue of the Johnson O'Malley Act whereby the federal government could enter into an agreement with the State of Minnesota to provide such services to the Indian of the state. Such a program would make it possible for both the children and adults to have access to the institutions and other social services within the state. For the first few years such a program would involve larger expenditures of state money but over a period of ten years it would be more economical, since the prevailing duplications would be eliminated and since more preventive work could be accomplished.

If the federal government should not care to enter into such a program, then that branch of government, through the Indian

Service, should provide an adequate number of social workers who could cooperate with the Minnesota Division of Social Welfare and county welfare boards.

* * * * *

For the injustices to the Indian in the past, some reparation has been made. The Indian is now a citizen of Minnesota and of the United States, but he still carries some of the scars of the past. If he is to enjoy the full benefits of citizenship, there is much to be done by the federal and state governments and also by the Indian himself. There is also much that private individuals and organizations could do so that the Indian might help himself.

When a Minnesotan talks about the Indian, let him ask himself whether he has done all that he might in order to make it possible for the Indian to participate more fully in American life.

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